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Correspondence regarding
the Cultivation of Tea
in Assam

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CORRESPONDENCE

REGARDING THE

CULTIVATION OF TEA

IN

Assam.

109966

From E. H. LUSHINGTON, Esq., Offg. Secretary to the Government of Bengal, with the Lieutenant-Governor on tour, to COLONEL F. JENKINS, Commissioner of the Assam Division,—[No. 23, dated the 15th August 1859, on board the Lieutenant-Governor's Yacht "Rhotas," off Berhampore.]

SIR,—WITH advertence to your letter No. 70, dated the 15th August 1856, to the address of the Board of Revenue, Lower Provinces, I am directed by the Lieutenant-Governor to furnish you with the accompanying Extract paragraph 30, from a Despatch* from the Secretary of State for India, and to request that you will have the goodness to submit at your earliest convenience a full and comprehensive report upon the success that has attended the cultivation of the Tea-plant in the Province of Assam.

* No. 3, dated 26th May 1859.

Extract from a Despatch from the Right Hon'ble the Secretary of State for India, in the Revenue Department, No. 3, dated the 26th May 1859.

PARA. 30. It is very satisfactory to find that there is a demand for Tea seeds for private plantations in the districts of Assam and Northern Cachar, and that Captain Jenkins' application for some for distribution was so promptly complied with. I shall be glad to hear that success has attended the cultivation of this plant, as it seems likely to prove of much use in civilizing and giving security to these wild districts.

1 Tea seeds supplied to Commissioner for distribution, from the Government plantations at Kumaon.

From COLONEL F. JENKINS, Agent to the Governor-General, North-East Frontier, to E. H. LUSHINGTON, Esq., Officiating Secretary to the Government of Bengal,—(No. 111, dated the 24th October 1859.)

SIR.—With reference to your letter No. 23, of the 15th August last, accompanied by an Extract from a Despatch from the Secretary of State for India, calling on me to submit a full and comprehensive report on the progress of Tea Cultivation in the Province, I have now the honor to forward the replies of the Assistants in charge of Divisions, as per margin, reporting on the state of Tea Cultivation in their several Districts.

1. Captain Rowlatt's report of the 6th instant, No. 31, for the Kamroop Division.
2 Captain Bivar's ditto of the 8th instant, accompanied by a Map of the Tea Plantations in the Luckimpore Division
3. Captain Comber's ditto No. 13, of the 20th instant, for the Durung Division.

2. I beg to make a few observations on each report. Captain Rowlatt shews that the extent of waste land granted away for the purpose of Tea cultivation in the Division of Kamroop, amounts to 12,207 acres, of which only 297 acres have yet been cultivated, and the produce of Tea for this year, or 1859, is 6,160lbs. It will be observed that of the largest grant, consisting of 9,326 acres, no part of it has yet been brought into cultivation.

3. Captain Rowlatt remarks that the commencement of the cultivation of Tea in Kamroop only began about five years ago, and, I may add, at first with only small experiments, as there was a supposition that Tea would not thrive in Lower Assam; but I am glad to say that the experience the Planters have now had gives every reason to conclude, that though the plant may not grow so luxuriantly as in Upper Assam, it will yield a sufficient produce to make the cultivation fairly remunerative.

A good deal of the Tea grown in Kamroop has hitherto been planted on the low hills round Gowhatty, and the progress of these Factories, though established under apparent disadvantages of site and soil, has given encouragement to all the Planters to go on increasing their cultivation.

4 Captain Rowlatt observes that the great drawback to the cultivation of Tea is the want of labor, and his special remedy for this deficiency, attributable, as he imagines, more to the want of industry

in the Assamese than to want of population, is to raise the Government assessment, and so force the Assamese to have recourse to labor to provide themselves with the necessaries and luxuries they are now accustomed to.

5. A good number of the Planters, I believe, concur with Captain Rowlatt, and think it is the duty of the Government to drive the laborers to their Plantations by taxing them more heavily; and this theme of the want of industry and energy in the Assamese, owing to the lowness of the assessments, and the great profit obtained by very easy labor on the part of the agricultural laborers, is, I think, largely established. It is, perhaps, however, fallacious, and rather owing to other circumstances, this people has so little industry. I should be inclined to impute this defect greatly to a very fertile soil, and for the most part to very auspicious seasons, to the abundance of land, so that every one who wishes it can procure sufficient land to maintain himself and family, to the customs of the country, by which every one who is married seeks to have a farm of his own, and in no small degree to the simple habits of the people, who are satisfied with the plainest food, the slightest habitations, and the least quantity of clothing for ordinary wear.

6. People who are thus easily satisfied are not likely to work hard in a climate, certainly very unfavorable to severe labor, unless driven to do so by other circumstances than those which now prevail; but I very much doubt whether any considerable enhancement of the taxes on the land would have that effect. It might certainly easily discourage them from cultivating more land than just sufficient to pay the Government tax and maintain themselves, probably to the loss of Government by the decrease of cultivation; surrendering that growing desire for foreign luxuries which we now see being gradually established, particularly the substitution of the fine and gay cottons and cloths of English manufacture, for their own dull, coarse, homespun, durable cottons and silks, and the consumption of Government Salt, to the disuse of the home-made impure salts of potash with which they were formerly content.

7. The Government tax on land may be, as it has been, gradually enhanced from time to time as money becomes abundant in the Province, or on other considerations, but I see no reason

why the social improvement of the people should be checked, and they be reduced to the unaccustomed misery of hard work, merely to provide the Tea Planters with cheap and abundant labor, when it is sufficiently evident that the profits of the Planters is very great, from the number of speculators continually pouring into the Province.

8. But the want of laborers is greatly owing to the races which compose the population of Assam.

Before we occupied the country, hired labor was almost unknown, or confined to the Cacharees, or other rude tribes unconverted to Hinduism, who were treated as serfs; household labor was performed by slaves, and the agricultural labor of those classes who did not cultivate themselves, was either performed by slaves or by neighbouring ryots, who had the means and who shared the products of the harvest in kind.

It was thus considered disgraceful for the better classes, freemen and Hindoos, to hire themselves for labor, and they have always avoided being employed as coolies as far as practicable, by pleading their right of exemption as *bhula manooses*, or gentlemen.

Of all the tribes, the unconverted Cacharees of Kamroop are still the only persons who will take hired labor, and go to a distance from their homes, but the Assamese proper are gradually consenting to take daily labor, and to execute task work in the vicinity of their villages, for the sake of the luxuries procurable with the extra gains thus earned, but not unfrequently to pay their present taxes, low as they are, under the uncertainties of season, accidents of inundations, and want of prudence and forethought.

9. Such being the long established habits and prejudices of the people, it seems obvious that they could only be driven to seek for hired labor in any much larger numbers, by imposition of such a degree of taxation, as would amount to the infliction of what they would consider a national calamity, and why should they thus be compelled to suffer merely to provide labor for speculators in a very profitable commercial undertaking, in which all seek to increase their plantations at a greater rate of expedition than the natural resources of the Province, under the fixed habits of the people, will admit.

10. Captain Rowlatt expects that the increased rate of assessment will cause to arise a greater variety of trades and occupations; but I do not consider his expectations well founded. We know the circumstances under which, in Bengal and other parts of India, so great a variety of castes, and consequently of occupations, have been created, but we know in these Eastern Frontiers that whole races of men, under the persuasion or the compulsion of their rulers, have become at once Hindoos, and have been admitted within the pale of one equality of caste, equivalent to Rajpoot or Koist, and out of this equality no provision for many trades was made, or can now be established. We have for instance no washermen, curers of leather, makers of shoes, and many other subordinate professions, and never can have out of the genuine Assamese population, as long as they continue Hindoos; such trades and occupations must always be confined to immigrant or imported foreigners; and the Rajahs accordingly did settle down some generations ago a few oil-pressers and weavers, and perhaps other artizans, to meet the growing wants of themselves and gentry.

11. Captain Rowlatt also recommends the prohibition of the indigenous cultivation of Opium, and in this measure all the local Officers and all the Planters have concurred; but the measure has not yet met with the approval of Government.

12. Captain Rowlatt further recommends the redemption of the land tax being permitted to the Planters, on which subject I will have the honor of making some comments, in touching on Captain Bivar's Report.

13. Captain Bivar, after giving, in his 3rd to 7th paragraphs, a summary account of the first cultivation of Tea in his District, annexes to his 8th paragraph a Tabular Statement, which shews that 14,038 acres of land have been taken up for the cultivation of Tea in the Luckimpore Division;* that 1,700 acres are under cultivation; and that the produce last year was 282,000 lbs. Although this is a more favorable return than that of Kamroop, it is still less than one-half the Tea so many acres of cultivated land should yield, the deficiency arising from the large proportion of land still unproductive, from the plant being for the most part young, of different growths, and much, of course, as yet being uncropped.

* The whole of this is situated on the south bank; no land has been yet applied for on the north bank in this Division

14. In his 10th to 12th paragraphs, Captain Bivar notices the beneficial effects of the Tea cultivation on the trade of the District, and the condition of the laboring classes, and he concludes that the cultivation of Tea is so full of advantages to the Division in every way, that it deserves all the encouragement that can be given to it.

15. In the 14th and subsequent paragraphs, Captain Bivar takes a view of the measures which might be adopted on the part of Government towards that encouragement which he advocates.

The principal of these is, the commutation of the terms on which the Planters now hold their lands; and he proposes, as Captain Rowlatt has done, that they be allowed to redeem the land tax to which they are now liable under the present grants, by the present payment of a certain amount per acre.

From a calculation which he has made of the amount Government would receive under the terms of the grants, Captain Bivar is of opinion, that the sum of 2 Rupees 8 annas an acre would be an equitable equivalent, at which the redemption might be fixed, the whole amount on these easy terms being paid down at once.

16. In a letter of mine to the Board of Revenue on this subject, No. 50 of the 19th July last, I proposed 5 Rupees an acre as the price to be demanded; but after a full consideration of the arguments adduced by Captain Bivar, I am inclined to think now that my standard was too high, and I would beg to solicit the consideration of the Government on this subject as early as practicable, for it seems so important to the best interests of the country, that it is highly desirable it should be settled without delay. In the closing paragraph of his letter, Captain Bivar states that there are still about 228,634 acres of waste still available for Tea plantation in his Division alone; and it seems sufficient to advert to this large extent of waste,—not only lying unprofitable, but most injurious to the neighbouring powerless Native cultivators, from the cover these forests afford to herds of destructive wild animals,—to shew how greatly advantageous to this Province any measure must be which tends to induce the larger introduction of capital, and its employment under European direction in the highly profitable production of Tea: not only by the reclamation of the jungles themselves, but by the consequent beneficial effect on all the country around them.

17. The next measure which Captain Bivar brings forward to promote the progress of Tea cultivation, is the execution of the Government Works, as far as possible, by laborers and artizans imported by the Government Officers for that purpose. If this were practicable to any extent, it would certainly prove of some relief to the Planters; lately, I understand, a good number of handicraft workmen have been introduced from the Jails of Bengal to assist in erecting the Jails of Sibsaugur and Debrooghur, and the measure, I conceive, is altogether most commendable. From the want of skilled workmen in the different useful crafts, Assam labors under much difficulty in this era of its progress in improvement, and I have often advocated the relief of the crowded Jails in Bengal, by drafting off workmen of different castes, to be sent to the Assam Jails; and if some gangs were sent up to each of the Jails in the Province, as they have now been sent to Sibsaugur and Luckimpore, I should consider it as likely to prove of very great benefit. In the same way, as a measure of relief to the Planters, the employment of our own Assamese convicts on the repairs and clearing of the roads and drains of the different stations, would be also, I think, most desirable.

The attempt now making to employ the prisoners on in-door manufactures seems to me attended with no good effect whatever; the whole of them being agricultural laborers, the attempt to teach them trades is, I think, quite futile, for all, with very rare exception, will abandon the trades the moment they quit the Jails; and in the mean time we are in great measure losing their labor, the labor they have been accustomed to, and which, notoriously, they have better and more cheaply performed than hired laborers: whilst at the same time we are largely taking away the coolies, who might much more profitably be engaged on the Tea plantations.

18. The last measure which Captain Bivar adverts to, in his 27th, 28th and 29th paragraphs, is the regular despatch of Government Steamers, as being of the highest importance to all the traders and European settlers in Assam. On this subject I need not dilate, as I believe nothing but the imperative demands of the public service has prevented the Government from abiding by the arrangement of keeping three Steamers employed on this line, for the purposes which Captain Bivar alludes to.

19. Referring to Captain Comber's Report, it appears there are only three Tea plantations in the Durrung Division, the extent of which is not recorded, but only about 300 poorahs* are said to have been brought under cultivation up to this date; the supposed produce of this year will be about 280 maunds, or 22,400 lbs.

* 375 acres.

Captain Comber states, that the Planters are prevented from extending their plantations from the difficulty of procuring labor, which he imputes to the lethargy of the Assamese from excessive indulgence in opium; and he would propose, as a remedy, that the local growth of poppy should at first be restricted, and eventually be entirely prohibited.

Captain Comber also alludes to the difficulty felt by the Planters in recovering advances made to the coolies, but he does not appear to think that any remedy can be well pointed out, considering the facilities given by our Rules of Procedure of themselves sufficient, if the coolies who abscond can be arrested. In this, however, I imagine is the real difficulty; but in the state of the country it is easy for a laborer to evade the Officers of the Police, and a runaway coolie is so sure of employment wherever he goes, that there is nothing to prevent his leaving his engagements whenever it may seem convenient; and I think most of the Planters are aware of the risk they run in making advances, especially to a Cacharee, to whom it is always irksome to be bound for any particular period; but after all, the Cacharee mostly absconds from some real or fancied injury, which he thus quietly resents.

Captain Comber concludes that he believes the cultivation of Tea has hitherto in no way proved harassing or irritating to the people, and thinks that for years to come the extension of Tea plantations cannot sensibly encroach on the lands which the ryots themselves cultivate, whilst that the vicinity of the Factories is in many ways beneficial to the neighbouring villages.

20. The reports from the remaining Divisions not having been yet received, and there may be some delay in receiving them, I beg to state that I will forward the others in continuation of this letter as early as practicable.

From CAPTAIN E. A. ROWLATT, Collector of Kamroop, to the Commissioner of Assam,—(No. 31, dated the 6th October 1859.)

SIR,— WITH reference to your letter No. 470, of the 11th ultimo, I have the honor to submit a Statement shewing the quantity of land taken up for cultivating Tea, the name of the grantee, and date of grant, the name of the plantation, quantity of land under cultivation, and supposed quantity of Tea manufactured in 1859-60.

2. It will be seen from this Statement that the out-turn of Tea for this year will only amount to 6,160 lbs., but as none of the plantations were commenced more than five years ago, and most only in 1857 and 1858, the result is not, I think, altogether unsatisfactory.

3. The great drawback is the want of labor, but even that I believe is not so severely felt in this district as in Upper Assam; the want of labor is undoubtedly caused by the low rate of assessment levied on the lands generally throughout the Province; but they are higher here than in any other district, and if the rates in the rest of Assam were raised to an equality with those prevailing in Kamroop, there then would be no objection to raising them again in this district, but until this is done, it would be unsafe to enhance them in Kamroop, as a great inequality of rates in adjoining districts would be likely to lead to the shifting of the population from the higher to the lower assessed district.

4. By raising the rates, the profits on ordinary cultivation would, of course, be decreased. This I think, in the present state of affairs, is desirable; for cultivation of the common crops is now so profitable, that all classes take to agriculture alone as a means of subsistence; all other means of obtaining a livelihood are therefore neglected; trade is entirely in the hands of foreigners; handicrafts of any kind are not pursued; and laborers for hire, and even domestic servants, are procurable only with difficulty, and at high rates of wages.

5. By inducing the people to take to a greater variety of employments, the country in general would certainly, I think, be benefitted; for when all alike pursue agriculture as the sole means of subsistence, the people must in a great measure not only be dependent on foreign markets for taking their surplus produce, but also purchase all manufactured goods from without the Province. If a greater variety of occupation was in vogue, the local markets would improve, and facilities be afforded for carrying on many branches of trade, and speculations of various kinds, which now it is quite impossible to conduct.

6. It may also be noted, that if what I state is correct, not only would the country be benefitted by a moderate increase of rate in the land rent, but that a corresponding increase to the Government revenue would be the consequence—a result at the present time of no slight importance.

7. I would also further beg to recommend, that the indigenous growth of Opium be entirely put a stop to. This can now be done without the least danger of any ill consequences arising, as vendors of the Government Opium have now located themselves all over the district, the drug is therefore readily procurable by all who consume it; and if all had to purchase instead of being allowed to grow it, each man in his own garden, this measure would certainly have the effect of restricting the consumption within reasonable bounds, and induce habits of industry, by forcing the people to work and pay for a pernicious luxury, which now they may be said to obtain for almost nothing.

8. It is the low cost and great ease with which every ryot is able to procure a supply of Opium that so thoroughly demoralizes the whole people ; if he had to purchase it, he would probably not give it to his wife, and certainly not to his children. Now it is consumed by all alike. This, if it produces no worse consequences, most certainly induces great laziness ; and as long as this remains, as it is as present, the peculiar characteristic of the Assamese people, they neither can become good cultivators nor industrious workmen. The Planters complain, and justly so, that even where laborers are procurable they cannot get a fair day's work done for a fair day's wages ; if, however, the use of Opium was restricted within reasonable limits, I see no reason why the Assamese in course of time, should not become as industrious as the people in other parts of India, instead of being—what they now most certainly are—the laziest people under the sun.

9. It would also tend further to encourage the investment of capital, if the Tea Planters were allowed to redeem the land rent under a scheme similar to that introduced in the Darjeeling territory.

10. These are the three points to which I think it is necessary to direct attention in reference to the subject under discussion, namely, a gradual increase in the rates of land rent, suppression of the growth of indigenous Opium, and the redemption of the land rent. These measures appear to me to be not only perfectly feasible and unobjectionable, but they would also, I think, tend directly to improve the prospects of speculators in general, be decidedly beneficial to the people of the country, and also add materially to the revenues of Government.

Statement shewing the quantity of Land taken up for the cultivation of Tea, the name of the Grantee and date of Grant, name of Plantation, quantity of Land under Cultivation, and supposed quantity of Tea manufactured in 1858-59.

Name of Grantee, and date of Grant.		Name of Grant.	Quantity of Land contained therein.	Supposed quantity of Land under Cultivation.	Supposed quantity of Tea made in 1858-59.
14th May 1853 ...	W. Robinson, Esq. ...	Phattaseel, Pergunnah Ramsaha ...	155 Acres.	35 Acres.	12 Maunds.
1st April 1857 ...	Ditto ...	Ditto, Desh Bettulla ...	460 „	5 „	None.
6th July 1857 ...	Mr. Pink ...	Khargoolee Clarence Tea Garden ...	222 „	30 „	20 Maunds.
1st April 8157 ...	„ C. W. Delanouzerede	Ramshaha Tea Garden ...	144 „	27 „	13 Ditto.
22nd November 1858	„ Bruce ...	Chowdryparrah ditto ...	186 „	10 „	None.
21st October 1857 ...	„ H. Michel ...	Phattaseel ...	253 „	30 „	6 Maunds.
19th April 1858 ...	„ J. R. D. Cameron ...	Ditto ...	136 „	5 „	None.
26th March 1857 ...	„ J. P. Wise ...	Moirapore ..	1,204 „	125 „	6 Maunds.
16th Ditto ...	W. Becher, Esq. ...	Khargholee ...	121 „	30 „	20 Ditto.
1st July 1859 ...	Ditto ...	Bordoar ...	9,326 „	...	None.
		Total	12,207	297	77 mds, or 6,160 lbs.

KAMROOP COLLECTOR'S OFFICE,
The 6th October 1859.

E. A. ROWLATT,
Collector.

From CAPTAIN H. S. BIVAR, Principal Assistant Commissioner, Luckimpore, to COLONEL F. JENKINS, Commissioner of Assam,—(No. 71, dated the 8th October 1859.)

SIR,—I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 470 of the 11th ultimo, calling upon me for a report on the cultivation and manufacture of Tea in the district under my charge, and with reference thereto, requesting information on questions connected with the plantation of Tea, its effect on the people of the district, the prospects of the Planters, and calling further for an opinion as to measures which it may appear expedient to adopt for assisting them in extending their operations.

2. In reply I beg to notice that the subject to be reported on is one needing careful consideration, and in dealing with it, I would have desired more leisure for reflection than I can at present command. Being on the eve of proceeding on furlough to Europe, I am unable, as time presses, to do more than offer a few remarks; but I trust that though brief, they will contain information sufficient to determine what it is sought to elucidate.

3. I beg to observe that Tea, which is indigenous to Assam, was discovered shortly after the occupation of the country by the British Government. In the district of Luckimpore, the cultivation of the plant was first undertaken by the Government. In 1835, a few indigenous plants, taken from the forest at "Ningroo," bordering on the Singphoe country, were put down on a strip of land at the "Koondil Mookh" at Suddujah. The garden there established did not succeed. The soil, which was alluvial, was unadapted for the cultivation, and this led to a removal of material to Jaipore in the Sibsagur Division. Here the cultivation of Tea was persevered in until 1840, when, with a view to promote enterprise and the development of Tea as a resource, the Government transferred two-thirds of its Tea establishment to the Assam Tea Company. After this the Government operations were confined to a plantation in Muttock, on a spot where much indigenous Tea had been discovered, and where the soil was found peculiarly favorable to the growth of the plant.

4. The government garden in the locality alluded to at Chaboah (meaning, literally translated, the Tea plantation, from *cha*, Tea, and *boah*, to sow) was carried on from 1840 to 1848. Over this period, whether from the Assam Tea,

then a produce little known to the commercial world, not being merchantable, or from a want of skill on the part of manufacturers, the Government plantation was an unprofitable affair, insomuch that it was deemed expedient to close it, and the Barri was disposed of (sold) in April 1849, to a Chinaman named "Among," who purchased it with all appurtenances for Rupees 952-14-8.

5. For three years following, there is little to notice in the annals of Tea cultivation. The Chinaman who purchased Chaboah (at present one of the finest plantations in the district) could make little of it. Lack of energy, as much as want of funds, paralyzed his operations, and in 1851, through the instrumentality of Colonel Hannay, an Officer whose exertions have contributed much to the development of Tea cultivation in this part of Assam, Chaboah changed hands, became the property of Messrs Warren, Jenkins and Co., for a consideration of Rupees 475.

6. During the time referred to above, the Chinaman was not the only failure; the period was one of depression as to manufacture of Tea. The Works of the Assam Tea Company, as far as their operations in this district were concerned, were all but suspended. In their Barries little was done, rank vegetation was unchecked, and clearances were stopped. And it was not until the year 1852 that a favorable turn took place in the matter of Tea cultivation, which has since opened a prospect of wealth and prosperity for the district.

7. In the cold season of 1852, Colonel Hannay, who had always taken a lively interest in the products of the country, and who had a small garden close to Dibroo, where he raised cotton, sugarcane and tea, &c. for experimental purposes, having been successful in the plantation of a small patch of China Tea, increased the cultivation. Having obtained land sufficient to admit of extending his operations, in 1852 Colonel Hannay cleared and planted out about 10 acres of land with Tea. At the same period Messrs. Warren and Jenkins, the proprietors of Chaboah, entered upon the formation of the Maeejan Tea Barree, now a most flourishing plantation, the property of Mr. G. R. Barry, of Serajgunge, and following the example first set by Colonel Hannay, an impetus was given to the extension of Tea cultivation, which has led to Tea in Luckimpore having invited the attention of capitalists, and to its promising fair to render the District one of the most important Divisions of Assam.

8. The following figured Statement shews the quantity of land taken up for the cultivation of Tea, the number of factories, the names of proprietors, the progress which has been made in cultivation, the supposed amount of Tea manufactured on each plantation, and the general out-turn of all factories from the year 1852 upwards to 1859.

| YEAR. | | |

9. From the Statement given, it is apparent that the total of land taken up for Tea cultivation amounts to 14,038 acres, that the quantity of land planted out, up to 1859, extends to 1700 acres, and that the produce manufactured has this season reached 2,82,000lbs. of Tea ; and as the average value of the Tea may be calculated at 6 annas the lb., the out-turn for 1859 can be put down 2,82,000 lbs., at 6 annas ; Rupees 1,05,750.

10. The effect produced in the district and on the people by the cultivation of Tea is already most marked, although, with reference to the quantity of land taken up for Tea, and the extent brought under cultivation ; the plantations are yet in an early stage of development ; yet, the establishment of ten factories in the vicinity of Dibroo Ghur has led to material improvement. Within the last few years, the value of labor has increased sensibly. Formerly, previous to the demand for coolies caused by the operations of the Planters, the hire of laborers was from Rupees 2-8 to Rupees 3 per mensem, it has now risen to Rupees 4, and at times it is even requisite to offer as high as Rupees 4-8 to secure services required. The natural consequence of this state of things is, that the ryots are becoming more and more independent. The cultivation of Tea not only affords occupation for men, but women and children also obtain employment as leaf-pickers ; and it follows that factories, wherever established, tend to promote comfort and plenty, and to reduce poverty and want.

11. The advantage resulting to the district from the expenditure of capital in the manufacture of Tea is not only confined to the poor classes ; carpenters, artisans, writers, and tradesmen benefit. The demand for produce of all articles of ordinary consumption has increased, and hence a general impulse is given to commerce. Within the last few years the Bazaars at Dibroo have doubled in extent, there has been a considerable increase to the trading community, and merchants from down country are continually opening new shops.

12. From what I have stated it may fairly be deduced, that the cultivation and manufacture of Tea is all-important to the well-being of the district, and to encourage its extension would undoubtedly conduce to most beneficial results.

13. The question, as to measures best calculated to promote the object in view, is one of great importance. I have weighed the subject, and on the one side, dwelling on the improvement of the district entrusted to my charge, and duly considering on the other, the interests of the State which are to be upheld, I would beg to propose the following measures for adoption:

14. The points which suggest themselves for consideration, in connection with the extension of Tea cultivation, are threefold.

First, the tenure of land.

Second, the matter of labor.

Third, the means of communication for export.

15. In dealing with the point first proposed, the question as to tenure of land, it may be observed, that under the rules in force promulgated on 23rd October 1854, by the Board of Revenue, grants or waste lands are assigned on leases for 99 years. The terms of the grants are, that one-fourth of the land set apart for houses, tanks, roads, &c. being free in perpetuity, the remainder is charged with no rent for 15 years, after which time it is to pay a revenue of 3 annas per acre for 10 years, and afterwards to bear a tax of 6 annas for 74 years, and the lease for 99 years being then out, it is ruled that re-settlement will be made on a moderate assessment.

16. In respect to rules adverted to, they contain certain conditions as to the progress of cultivation, it being rendered imperative, on penalty of forfeiture of grant, that one-eighth shall be cleared and rendered fit for cultivation by the expiration of the fifth year, one-fourth by the expiration of the tenth, one-half by the twentieth, and three-fourths by the thirtieth. On the subject of these conditions, although, on the whole, it must be admitted they are liberal, yet I would venture to state it as my opinion, that it would not only promote improvement, but prove beneficial to the interest of Government, if lands were assigned to the Planters under a lasting and more simple title.

17. What I would venture to propose for consideration is, that without interfering with existing rules, which might be maintained for general purposes, the *bonâ fide* Tea Planter should have the option of taking up fresh holdings, or redeeming land he may have already obtained by ready money purchase in fee simple of land, in plots of not less than 500 acres at a time, at the rate of Rupees 2-8 the acre.

18. Land in quantities I have noticed, being purchased by the Planter at the rate of Rupees 2-8 the acre, would become his property in prepetuity, free of any land tax, and such an advantage, I would beg to urge, could not but encourage extension of Tea cultivation. My reasons for recommending that the land purchased in fee simple should be paid for in ready money, and disposed of in plots of not less than 500 acres, is as much with a view to protect the interest of the Planter as to secure public benefit. For the sale of land in plots of 500 acres and upwards, would effectually prevent the right being abused by persons taking up lands merely for the sake of cutting timber, or for the cultivation of Opium; the former being detrimental to the preservation of an important resource, and the latter being highly injurious to the industry of the country.

19. With respect to the rate, Rupees 2-8 per acre, at which I have proposed waste lands should be sold to Tea Planters, I would beg to notice that although the amount is small, yet taking into consideration the extent of waste lands which exists, and the obvious advantage which would arise if the whole could be converted into Tea cultivation, the sale of land on moderate terms mentioned could not but prove beneficial.

20. Viewed in a financial point, the sale of land at Rupees 2-8 the acre is not unimportant For example, a Planter taking up 5,000 acres of land under 99 years lease rule, would hold 1,250 acres, one quarter rent free for ever, and, after 15 years' grace for the remaining 2-3rd 3,750 acres, he would have to pay 3 annas per acre for 10 years, Rupees 703 per annum, and then for the next 74 years until resettlement, he would be assessed 6 annas the acre, or Rupees 1,406 per annum; on the other hand, if allowed to purchase the land at Rupees 2-8 the acre, for 5,000 acres, the Planter would pay down Rupees 12,500, which sum, at the end of 15 years, bearing compound interest at 5 per cent. would be equal to Rupees 25,986, and as annual interest of this sum at 5 per cent. would be Rupees 1,299, this sum when brought in calculation with the land revenue, 3 annas the acre, or Rupees 703 per annum (demandable for 10 years on the 99 years' rules) would give a yearly gain of Rupees 596; and carrying on the calculation in this way, taking into consideration revenue demandable for 74, at 6 annas the acre, at the end of 99 years, as per margin, from the Rupees 2-8 originally paid by the Planter, a capital of Rupees 2,38,494 would be attained, which sum would yield, at 5 per cent. per annum, an income of Rupees 11,924, equal to

Office Memorandum.

Vide letter to Board of Revenue No. 50, dated 19th July 1859, proposing 5 Rupees the acre.

	Rs.	As.	P.
Capital derived at the expiration of 15 years from Rupees 12,500, purchase-money for 5,000 acres of land, at Rupees 2-8, with compound interest at 5 per cent.	25,986	0	0
Interest on 25,986 Rupees, at 5 per cent. per annum, Rupees 1299	0	0	
Deduct Government demand on 3,750 acres of land, at 3 annas per acre ... 703	0	0	
Gain per annum, Rupees 596	0	0	
Which sum, at compound interest at 5 per cent. for 10 years, will yield	7,544	0	0
Capital derived on the expiration of 25 years, Rs.	33,527	0	0
Interest on Rupees 33,527, at 5 per cent per annum, Rupees 1676	0	0	
Deduct Government demand on 3750 acres, at 6 annas per acre, Rupees ... 1406	0	0	
Gain per annum, Rupees 270	0	0	
Which sum, at compound interest at 5 per cent. for 74 years, will yield	2,04,967	0	0
Capital derived according to the calculation at the expiration of 99 years, will be	2,38,494	0	0

assessment (on 3-4ths of grant of 5,000 acres) on 3,750 acres to Rupees 3-2-10 the acre, or treble the rate of revenue now charged for the best lands in the District.

21. From the above it must, I would submit, be admitted that Rupees 2-8 the acre for purchase in fee simple of land for Tea cultivation, is a fair price, and I would further observe, that apart from other calculation, it must not be lost sight of that the export duty on Tea in Calcutta is 3 per cent. *ad valorem.* This season the out-turn of the manufacture amounts to 282,000 lbs., which at the average price of 6 annas the lb. will give Rupees 105,750, yielding a duty at 3 per cent. of Rupees 3,172-8. The manufacture of Tea will go on increasing from year to year; it is calculated that even at the present ratio of operations, the Planters will be able to show in 1863 a return of 1,000,000 lbs. of Tea, which at 6 annas the lb., will give Rupees 375,000, value of which will carry a duty at 3 per cent. of Rupees 11,250.

22. From the above premises it may, I would urge, be justly assumed, that to encourage the cultivation of Tea by sale in fee-simple of land (taken up for Tea) at Rupees2-8 the acre, cannot be but advantageous as much to the Government as to the Planters.

23. The next question for consideration is, to the matter of labor. Population in Luckimpore, nothwithstanding what may be urged to the contrary, is undoubtedly scanty. From the most recent census the population in round numbers does not exceed 100,000 souls, one-half of which calculated as females would leave 50,000, and counting another half as children, there remains a population of 25,000 men; and as the area of the District may be set down in round numbers at 6,000 square miles a population of 25,000 men, admitting that all were cultivators, which they are not would give 4 and decimal 16=4. 16 laborers to the square mile, which is very low.

24. The scarcity of labor which prevails in Luckimpore, is a great check upon the operation of the Planters. They are obliged, at a considerable risk and outlay, to import coolies. To remedy this disadvantage is no easy matter. I have considered the subject, and the result is, that it occurs to me that the best way in which the Government could lend aid to the Planters would be as follows:—

25. I would recommend that all Public Works in the Province should be carried on by Government with imported labour, that for the construction of roads, bridges, buildings, &c. a Public Works Corps should be raised; that the Government having entertained laborers in Bengal, should bind them down to serve three years, and artisans and laborers thus sent into the District, at the expiration of their contracted period of service, might return to their homes or take service with the Planters.

26. The measure I have adverted to, if carried out, would be beneficial in a threefold manner. On the one hand, a regular Public Works Corps would insure works of utility being skilfully and speedily accomplished; on the other, it would leave the laboring population of the District entire for Planters to secure ; and thirdly, it would throw labor into the country, as workmen, having served out their time with Government, would be eagerly sought for, could settle in the District, and obtain employment from the Planters.

27. The third and last point or argument is, the means of communication for export. The Planters have hitherto, and are still mainly dependent upon Government for forwarding their produce to Calcutta. So long as the Steamer was despatched from Calcutta to Dibroo from month to month, it was sufficient for the requirements of the District ; since, however, the mutiny outbreak in 1857, the Steamers have only come up at long intervals, and with such uncertainty as to time of departure, as to render them of little use.

28. Of course the requirements of the State in other quarters led to disability as mentioned, and the Planters, aware that they cannot depend wholly on Government, which has at all times weighty interests to attend to, and cannot place its resources at the disposal of any section of the public, have resolved to aid themselves, and a Steam Company, to be named the "Dacca and Assam Steam Navigation Company," whose boats are to run between Calcutta and Dibroo Ghur, is now in course of organization. When the Company has been fairly established, and the boats start regularly, the Planters at Dibroo will experience no difficulty in exporting their produce ; but until then, as the Company is only now in course of formation, and it may take a twelve month or more before it is in operation, I would urge for consideration of Government, that a Steamer should be despatched to Dibroo regularly, from month to month, on a certain fixed date.

29. I would beg to dwell particularly as to the matter of the despatch of the Steamer on a fixed date. The point is important, as unless it is determined calculations are rendered futile, and disappointment in procuring goods from Calcutta or in obtaining freight results.

30. Having offered a few remarks upon what occurs to me to pertain to the attainment of the object proposed in your letter under acknowledgment, I beg, in conclusion, to submit for reference a Map of the tract in Luckimpore in which Tea is found. In the Map the position of the several factories is shown; and I beg to notice, that the whole of the tract lying between the Bramahpooter, the Boori Dehing and the Nao Dehing, is more or less adapted for the cultivation of Tea. The land

needs no irrigation, the moisture which it attains from the periodical rains being more than sufficient for all purposes. I beg to add, that the quantity of waste land still available for Tea cultivation, may be set down in round numbers at 228,634 acres; and I would beg to express an opinion, that as the cultivation of Tea extends, prosperity to the country will increase, in such wise, as not only to benefit the people themselves, but to secure advantage to the State; as wealth, which will result, will enable the tiller of the soil to contribute more largely than he does at present to the necessities of the Government, will enable him in fact to pay double the revenue which is at present demanded.

From CAPTAIN A. K. COMBER, Principal Assistant Commissioner of Durrung, to COL. F. JENKINS, Agent, Governor-General,—(No. 13, dated the 20th October 1859.)

SIR,—I HAVE the honor to reply to your letter No. 470, of 11th ultimo requesting me to furnish a full report on the success that has attended the cultivation of Tea in this Division.

2. The cultivation of the Tea plant has not been undertaken here to the extent that it has in the Districts of Upper Assam, owing, I presume, to the pre-conceived notion that the soil of the part of the Province was more adapted for successful operations than either Central or Lower Assam, though, from what I have seen myself after having visited most of the best plantations in the Seebsagur and Luckimpore Districts, I have no reason to think that the plant will not flourish as luxuriantly here as in Upper Assam.

3. I propose to notice each Plantation. Balleeparah was commenced by Mr. Martin in October 1854, and between that month and February of the following year, 50 poorahs were sown with Tea seed. In season 1855-56, 50 poorahs were added. In season 1856-57, 20 poorahs; and in season 1857-58, 30 poorahs more, making in all 150 poorahs.

Balleeparah.

Area from Sunnud 304 pounds 380 acres.

4. Mr. Martin informed me that they did not extend their clearances further, owing to the extreme difficulty experienced in procuring labor for the purpose of keeping clear during the rains the land they had already sown.

5. The Balleeparah Plantation produced in season 1857, that is to say from March to October, 30 maunds of Tea; in the season of 1858, maunds 110; and during the present season it is expected to yield 200 maunds of Tea.

6. Holleswar, also the property of Messrs. Martin and Son, was commenced in October 1857, and during the cold season of 1857-58, 50 poorahs of land were sown with Tea seed, and in 1858-59, 30 poorahs more were added. This Plantation has not yet reached the yielding age. I visited the Holleswar Plantation about two months ago, and found the two year old plants looking very well, and the garden (though composed chiefly of China veridis and hybrid plants, with but few real Assam plants) is not inferior to any plantation of the same age I have seen in Upper Assam.

Holleswar. 200 poorahs.

7. Singrai Factory belongs to the Assam Company. It was commenced in 1855 ; there are 70 poorahs of land under Tea cultivation, supposed to yield during the present season 80 maunds of Tea. The extent of land originally taken up by the Assam Company at Singrai was 2557 poorahs.

Singrai

8. The great drawback to the cultivation of Tea is the difficulty of procuring sufficient labor ; the Planters find that the ryots are all so well off, that they cannot be induced to work, and that this difficulty will exist until a necessity to work arises. This, I imagine, could only be brought about by an increase in the rates of the Government demand for land revenue, and this is a very difficult and important question.

9. It is an undoubted fact that the ryots have the very greatest objection to exert themselves in the least degree, so long as they have sufficient rice and Opium ; and any measure which would raise the Assamese population from the lethargy induced by excessive indulgence in the use of Opium, would unquestionably result in an improved condition of the people both physically and morally, at the same time that an increased rate of taxation would oblige the ryot to work, and thus benefit both himself and the Tea Planters.

10. This necessity to exertion, followed by the gradual restoration and eventual prohibition of the cultivation of the poppy, would, I firmly believe, tend more than anything else to the improvement and prosperity of the people.

11. Another difficulty which the Tea Planters complain of is, the slender protection afforded by our Courts in cases of breach of contract for labor. Nothing is more common than men taking advances to labor, and decamping before half the period of their agreement is expired ; to enforce a completion of which through our Courts is very tedious and expensive ; but I am not aware that anything can be recommended to facilitate the recovery of such advances. Under the rules for the administration of criminal cases in Assam, such cases can be tried *viva voce*, and it is only necessary for the party to point out the delinquent.

12. The cultivation of the Tea hitherto has not in any way proved harassing or irritating to the people, nor do I think that extended operation, in the cultivation of the plant, can prospectively prove otherwise than beneficial to the people at large. There are such vast tracts of waste lands that they are not likely ever to be taken up to a sufficiently large extent as to encroach on the rice-growing and furring hettic lands of the Assamese inhabitants, while the factories would always afford the opportunity of earning an honest and fair livelihood to the ryots, men, women and children.

From COLONEL F. JENKINS, Agent to the Governor-General, North-Eastern Frontier, to E. H. LUSHINGTON, ESQ,, Officiating Secretary to the Government of Bengal, —(No. 118, dated the 11th November 1859.)

SIR.—In continuation of my letter No. 111 of the 24th ultimo, I have the honor to submit the further reports on Tea, noticed in the margin.

Captain Lloyd's letter No. 165, of the 28th ultimo.
Captain Holroyd's letter No. 172, of the 2nd instant.

2. Captain Lloyd states there are 11,034 of acres taken up in the Nowgong Division for Tea cultivation, but he does not give any detail of the land actually planted, nor of the produce of Tea; but I believe this to be very small, all the factories being of late establishment.

From the Statement annexed, there appear to be fourteen factories now in the course of clearance in the Nowgong Division.

3. Captain Lloyd suggests that the land revenue should be increased, and the local cultivation of Opium be prohibited as measures likely to produce industry amongst the ryots, and hence be the means of providing more available labor for the Planters.

Mr. Martin, in a letter of the 17th ultimo, annexed, with reference to the same result and to afford assistance to the Tea Planters, proposes the suppression of the cultivation of Opium, a gradual increase of the land revenue and the remission of the export duty on Tea.

4. Captain Holroyd's letter contains but a very brief summary of the progress of Tea cultivation in the Sibsagur Division. This Division is the first by far in importance as to Tea culture, and is likely long to remain so, not from being more suitable for the growth of this plant, but from its comprising the principal plantations of the Assam Company,

which had made a great start before Tea was cultivated elsewhere to any extent, also from the comparative large population of the Division, as well as from the large area of waste lands conveniently situated for the conveyance of produce to the Berhampooter for transport to Calcutta.

5. From the information given by Captain Holroyd, the total quantities of land taken up and of land cultivated, are not obtainable, as these items are not given as regards the Assam Company, and I have no late report of that Association at hand to refer to.

The land taken up by private individuals in the Sibsagur Division amounts to about 12,489* acres, the area cultivated by the Assam Company and private individuals is nearly 5,217 acres; the quantity of Tea produced last season by all parties was 846,249lbs., and the probable produce of the next season will, under favourable circumstances, exceed 1,500,000lbs.

* This includes 3,471 acres applied for but not yet granted. By Return in my Office of 1856, the whole quantity of land taken up by the Assam Company appears to be only about 5,000 acres.

6. Captain Holroyd in his 4th paragraph enlarges on the advantages with which the cultivation of Tea has undoubtedly been attended as regards the ryots of his Division, and in his 5th paragraph touching on the means of encouraging Tea cultivation, he advocates an increase of the land rent and the entire prohibition of local Opium cultivation, and he likewise suggests the possibility of organizing, under Government, a sound system of emigration.

7. I have compiled in the Office a general Statement of the whole of the Tea plantations now being worked in the different Zillahs, as correctly as I could make it in the absence of a detail of the Assam Company's factories in the Sibsagur Division. The result shows that 7,599 acres of land is now under cultivation in Assam for Tea and in a more or less forward state of culture, the produce of which for the last season was 1,205,689lbs.

An acre of land well cultivated will give six maunds of Tea and upwards, and if the land now under cultivation was only giving the low average of five maunds per acre, the produce would be upwards of thirty lakhs of lbs.

8. The present out-turn, compared with what it may be when the lands now under cultivation are in full bearing, will shew how backward much of the plant on this land must still be, at the same time that it clearly points out the difficulties to be encountered in the full culture of this extent of land, independent of further clearances; as the present command of labor is found so greatly insufficient that the land already planted cannot be properly cultivated, nor the full crop of leaves cannot be picked.

9. The prospect of any rapid progress for the future, on this ground, is by no means encouraging unless some very effectual remedies can be suggested to overcome this deficiency of labor. Captains Rowlatt, Comber, Lloyd, and Holroyd concurring with the opinions proclaimed by Mr. Barry in his pamphlet on the subject, suggest that the land revenue should be raised as one means of throwing labor into the hands of the Planters by compelling the ryots to seek for employment in order to pay their revenue.

10. I cannot believe that any measure short of such a severe taxation as the Government would certainly not sanction, could have any material effect in increasing the command of labor; and it seems evident to me that any great increase in the assessment would have the effect of decreasing the quantity of land cultivated, to the certain loss to the Government.

It has just been brought to my notice that such has been the alarm amongst the Durrung Mouzadars from the loss of ryots, that they have entered into an agreement not to allow Duffadars (recruiting for coolies) to come into the villages, and one reason given for this resolution of their's was that the Duffadars made the young men drunk and forced advances upon them in that state, and thus seduced them away from their families and fields.

11. It is certain that the Planters have been attempting to push on their cultivation to a greater extent than the means of procuring labor in the Province rendered judicious and prudent. The consequence has been, that at almost every factory, more land has been planted, than can be kept thoroughly weeded and attended to, and during the short

season of picking the leaves, much of the produce is lost for want of hands to gather the leaves although most liberal payments are made to the pickers, who must always be principally the women and young people of the neighbouring villages.

12. I think I shall not exaggerate, when I say that we have now fully one-third more land planted with Tea plants than can be properly farmed, and that the two-thirds fully cultivated would produce more Tea than the whole quantity in its present state of culture.

In other words the little labor we have is wasted in useless extension of plantations.

Of course planters who are, above all things, anxious to lay out the whole of their available capital, are disappointed by the check their speculations have received, and not only misunderstand the causes of the inadequacy of the labor, but impede their mutual operations by a blind competition to obtain a sufficiency for themselves.

13. It was hoped that the commencement of Tea operation in Sylhet and Cachar would have been attended with some relief to Assam, in drawing off the number of speculators, but that does not seem to have been the case as yet, and it is unfortunate that to a considerable extent the planters on that side of the hills have been drawing on Assam for coolies, preferring our Cacharees to the ryots of those districts.

14. The only real remedy for the limited quantity of labor in Assam, is the introduction of laborers from abroad.

Two or three attempts on a small scale to bring in dhangars and others have been made by the Assam Company, and one or two of the planters; but as yet owing to some mismanagement of the planters or misconception on the part of the immigrants, all such undertakings hitherto have been conspicuously, failures.

I shall not attempt to state the causes of this failure, but I have no doubt whatever that all difficulties in the way of procuring coolies from abroad can be overcome and must be surmounted before there can be any great extension of our present Tea plantations.

15. A considerable extension may yet take place by judiciously opening plantations near centres of populations which have not yet been engaged in the cultivation of the Tea plant from their distance from any factories, but the planters concerned in the present extensive factories in the Sibsagur and Dibrooghur Divisions, must be greatly retarded in their future operations unless they contrive to import foreign laborers; and now they are greatly dependent on the whim of Kamroop and Durrung Cacharees, a race often difficult to manage, exceedingly jealous of ill-treatment, and who at Nazira, have lately shown a dangerous spirit of combination and mutiny.

From the large extent of wastes still available, and the aptitude of the soil and climate of Assam for the cultivation of Tea, there is no doubt that the growth and manufacture of Tea may become of great national importance in this Province, but only by the large importation of laborers from foreign Provinces.

The ground already taken up for Tea in Assam, would produce, if all was rendered productive, thirty millions of lbs. of Tea, or about half the quantity now imported into England yearly from China.

16. As a further remedy for the scarcity of laborers, all the local Officers have proposed the prohibition of the cultivation of Poppy in Assam, and I concur with them in advocating this measure, not so much that I think Opium has the very ill effects most people attribute to it, but because the cultivation employs a very great number of hands to no purpose, as generally Government Opium can be introduced at a less expense, and because the gathering of the Opium and the storing it in each house in the province leads to its being used by the children and women, and this early habit of using it, induces in mature life an over indulgence in a drug which is as poisonous as Gin when taken in too large quantities; and besides by the introduction of the Government Opium we have greatly lowered the price of the indigenous drug (kanee) and diffused and encouraged its consumption.

17. As further assistance to the planters, Captains Rowlatt and Bivar have advocated the resumption of the land tax, to which I have

adverted in the 12th and 15th paragraphs of my former letter of the 24th ultimo, and on this subject, I have now nothing to add; and I will conclude by observing that the question of an increase of the assessment on the ryots' lands will be shortly submitted for the consideration of the Board of Revenue.

From CAPTAIN E. P. LLOYD, Officiating Collector of Nowgong to the Commissioner of Assam,—(No. 165, dated the 28th October 1859.)

SIR,—IN reply to your letter No. 470, dated the 11th September last, calling upon me for a full and comprehensive report on the success that has attended the Tea cultivation in this district, I have the honor to state that the quantity of land taken up for this purpose is 11,034 acres, and that I addressed a letter, on the 13th instant to the planters, as per accompanying statement, requesting to know what progress had been made on their respective plantation, and the annual amount of Tea manufactured by them. I have only received a reply from one of them, which I have the honor to annex. On receipt of the others, I will forward a supplementary report.

2. I have every reason to believe that the cultivation of Tea in this district has been attended with great success, and that, provided, private capital be forthcoming, there is no limit to its extension. The effect of such undertakings on the people of the country is most favorable; large sums of money are put into circulation, the condition of the people is improved, and they are encouraged and instructed in habits of regular industry and thrift. The great difficulty the planters have to contend with is in procuring labour, and I think the low assessment prevailing in the country much enhances that difficulty. With but slight personal inconvenience or exertion, the peasants are able to grow sufficient to provide for their revenue and private consumption. This is all that they look for, and nothing but the most exorbitant wages will induce them to accept any service involving a higher degree of regular labour. I would suggest the gradual increase of the assessment throughout the province, and the encouragement of the introduction of coolies as the most promising method of meeting the difficulty. The planters are of opinion that the prohibition of Opium is the indispensable condition on which the prospective welfare and progress of the province depends, but this is a moot point on which I do not presume to offer an opinion.

Statement showing the quantity of land taken up for the Cultivation of Tea in the District of Nowgong, Assam.

Names of parties who applied for Grant of waste lands for the cultivation of Tea.	Name of Mehal in which the Grant is situated.	Quantity of lands applied for.	Remarks.
1. H. Burkinyoung, Esq. ...	Nomoligur in Mehal Morung ...	1020 Acres.	Sanctioned.
2. G. Williamson, Esq. ...	Mehal Kuliabur, Mouzah Chillabanda ...	500 „	Ditto.
3. J. Herriot, Esq. ...	Mehal Jumona Mookh, Mouzah Nizduboka ...	700 „	Ditto.
4. Mr. Stewart, ...	Mehal Morung, Kismut Punka ...	296 „	Ditto.
5. Paterson Saunders, Elder ...	Mehal Dantipar, Mouzah Nelly ...	1135 „	Ditto.
6. G. R. Barry, Esq. ...	Bhelleogooree and Rungagorrah ...	1406 „	Ditto.
7. J. Herriot, Esq. ...	Mehal Meekinpar, Mouzah Koteahtolly ...	2173 „	Will be re-submitted for sanction.
8. Ditto, ...	Koteahtolly and Bhelleagooree ...	466 „	Applied for on the 23rd April 1859.
9. Mr. R. Spears, ...	Mehal Morung ...	1333 „	Applied for.
10. H. Partridge, Esq. ...	Rungajan in Mouzah Morungee ...	293 „	Sanctioned.
11. Mr. Lyall, ...	Dukhin Kholla ...	300 „	Applied for on the 8th April 1859.
12. Mr. G. Williamson, ...	Mouzah Namdyang ...	412 „	Sanctioned.
13. Ditto, ...	Ditto Rungoligur ...	400 „	Applied for on the 27th August 1859.
14. Ditto, ...	Ditto Kazeerangah ...	600 „	Ditto and orders have been received from the Commissioner to commence clearing the land.

Collector's Office;
Zillah Nowgong,
The 28th October 1859.

E. P. LLOYD,
Officiating Collector.

From J. N. MARTIN, Esq., Attorney for P. SAUNDERS, Esq., to CAPTAIN P. LLOYD, Officiating Collector of Nowgong,—(dated the 17th October 1859.)

SIR,—I HAVE the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 154, of the 30th instant, annexing a copy of a letter from the Commissioner, No. 470 of the 11th ultimo, soliciting information regarding Tea cultivation on the Nowgong district, and requesting to be informed of the progress made in Mr. Paterson Saunder's Grant at Niller.

2. In reply, I beg to state that owing to the delay in obtaining the pottah, before Mr. Saunders went to England, he was unwilling to incur any great outlay, until he had a proprietary right in the Grant. About 20 acres of forest has been cleared and a house erected.

3. With reference to the concluding paragraph of the Commissioner's letter requesting you to add my remarks on the measures which the Government could adopt to assist the planters in extending their cultivation, I would beg to suggest that the cultivation of Opium be prohibited, which may be considered the curse of the country. Its cultivation and use has of late years been considerably increased with corresponding injury to the people. I would advocate a gradual increase in the land Revenue and the remission of the export duty on Tea levied under the new tariff of March last, which is 3 per cent in favor of China and against the British production. Cotton, Wool, Sugar and Rum, Spirits, Tobacco, and Raw Silk are exempt from export duty to enable India to compete with foreign produces ; and as it seems to be the wishes of Her Majesty's Secretary of State, and his Honor the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, to assist the Tea planters to extend the cultivation and manufacture of Tea, the removal of the export duty, which adds but little to the general revenue, would be a boon to the planters.

From CAPTAIN C. HOLROYD, Collector of Seebsagur, to COLONEL F. JENKINS, Commissioner of Assam, Gowhatty,—(No 172, dated the 2nd November 1859.)

SIR,—AGREEABLY to the order contained in your letter No. 470, of the 11th of September 1859, I have the honor to submit a report on the success that has attended the cultivation of the Tea plant in this district.

With regard to operations in the Seebsagur district, the Assam Company are the only party who can be said to have as yet done much in the way of exportation; the plantations of private planters may be said to be as yet only in embryo; nevertheless success has attended their efforts, though it is difficult to state to what extent, until their plantations have attained maturity. At the close of the last season the Assam Company had 2558 poorahs, 3381 acres of land, under Tea cultivation yielding a crop, the out-turn was 693,249 lbs. of Tea, being an average of 205 lbs. per acre. The number of factories held by the Assam Company in this district is 18, and the total area of land under cultivation by the Company in this district is about 3,000 poorahs, 3,967 acres. The greatest obstacle to the operations of the Company as well as private planters, is the want of labor which is now more serious than ever. The Company every year sustain heavy loss owing to the inadequate supply of labor, and the importance of the subject may be understood, when it is remembered that the collection of the leaf and manufacture entirely depends on the supply of labour available; that a day's delay in plucking the green leaf when in a fit state, causes immense loss by the leaf becoming too old to manufacture; and not only is the leaf itself lost, but unless plucked, the trees will not again speedily throw out young leaf, and thus the out-turn is materially diminished. Further, to illustrate the importance of an ample supply of labor, to enable a high state of cultivation being carried on, I may remark that the average out-turn of the Company's factories is a little over three maunds per poorah; whereas a garden in full bearing and properly cultivated will yield six maunds per poorah, as in fact one of the Assam Company's gardens did, where the supply of labor was better proportioned to the extent of land under cultivation. The anticipated increase in the out-turn during the present year was 70,000 lbs.; and if a supply of labour is obtained from Bengal, the out-turn in 1861 will probably amount to 1,000,000 lbs. of Tea.

Efforts have been made by the Assam Company to obtain labor from Bengal, but as yet without much success; the dhangars are the best class of coolies to import; they are industrious, hardy and very orderly: a few families were lately brought up by the Assam Company and have enjoyed excellent health.

2. I now submit the following Statements of Factories held by private individuals. First such as are now yielding an out-turn :—

Name of Planter.	Factory and year when commenced.	Extent.	Under cultivation.	Out-turn Crop season 1858.	Remarks.
Mr. George Williamson, ...	Cinamara, 1854, ...	872 Acres,	343 Acres,	70,000 lbs.,	This Factory is capable of yielding 1,00,000 lbs., but there is no increase from want of labor to collect the crop.
Mr. J. E. Todd, ...	Noakochorie, 1854, ...	500 „	182 „	43,000 „	Increase this year not known; if any, very slight, from the same cause, want of labor.
Mr. R. Spears, ...	Nigri Ting, 1853, ...	1200 „	313 „	40,000 „	Increase expected this year 16,000 lbs. This gentleman obtained a gang of about 100 Cacharie laborers.

The following is a Memorandum showing Factories that have been commenced by private parties, but which as yet have not yielded an out-turn :—

Names of Planters.	Factory and date commenced.	Extent.	Under cultivation.	Remarks.
Mr. George Williamson, ...	Bengnakhoa, 1857, ...	407 Acres,	117 Acres,	Ensuing season out-turn estimated at 12,000 lbs.
Ditto, ...	Owa Ting, 1857, ...	490 „	100 „	Ditto ditto, 10,000 lbs.
Ditto, ...	Ghilladhary, 1859, ...	244 „	100 „	Unknown.
Ditto, ...	Singloo, 1859, ...	260 „	25 „	Ditto.
Mr. R. Spears, ...	Khongiah, 1857 ,...	1300 „	0	Ditto.
Ditto, ...	Nahorunee, 1857, ...	667 „	0	Ditto.
Mr. J. E. Todd, ...	Holongapar, 1857, ...	200 „	20 „	Ensuing season's out-turn estimated at 5,000 lbs.
Ditto, ...	Deborapar, 1859, ...	200 „	30 „	Ditto ditto 250 lbs.
Mr. H. Jenkins, ...	Khowang, 1859, ...	1178 „	0	Unknown.
Mr. Hassack, ...	Eta Barie, 1858, ...	700 „	30 „	Ditto.
Mr. R. D. Nuthall, ...	Jaipore, 1859, ...	400 „	0	Ditto.
Mr. W. Straford, ...	Irok, 1859, ...	400 „	0	Ditto.

3. In addition to the above, applications have lately been made by four parties for Grants for Tea cultivation to the extent of 3,471 acres, which are now being surveyed, preparatory to submission of the applications to the Board of Revenue.

4. Regarding the 3rd paragraph of your letter, I consider it to be an undoubted fact, that Tea cultivation has had a most beneficial effect on the ryots of the district in general, in so far as their own comforts are concerned. It had the effect of stimulating them to industry for a time, but as their wants are few, and land rent very low, they soon acquire, by working on a Tea plantation, a sum sufficient to supply these wants, and they seem indifferent to earning more. The laborers around the factories, and who in the first instance formed them, are now in affluent circumstances and do not now work at those factories. During the past three years also, a considerable increase has taken place in the price of grain and all other produce; in 1856-57 dhan used to sell at sixteen poorahs* for the Rupee, and during the past two years it has sold at only four poorahs† for the Rupee, the producer thus receiving now four times the price for his produce compared to what he did four years ago, and this without paying any increase of land rent or tax of any kind; and the Assamese laborers being all agriculturalists, they, of course, all benefit by the rise in price. I have no hesitation in stating that there are no peasantry in the world better off than the Assamese.

* 8 Maunds.
† 2 Maunds.

5. The prospective advance of the commerce of Assam by Tea cultivation, will mainly depend on the measures adopted by Government to aid the Tea planters in procuring an adequate supply of labor. What would materially tend towards the furtherance of this object as regards the Assamese laborer, would be a general increase of the land rent, and the entire prohibition of the cultivation of Opium throughout the province.

In addition to the above, every assistance should be given by Government to the planter in bringing emigrants into the province, and this I think can be best done by organizing under Government patronage a sound system of emigration; every facility being afforded the planter in bringing the emigrants to the Province on board the Government steamers, and if at any, at a mere nominal charge. With a sufficiency of labor, and regular steam communication with the Presidency, the Assam Tea planter would soon become in a position to increase greatly the field of his operations, and the trade and prosperity of the province be in like measure advanced.

Tabular Statement of the Tea Factories established in Assam.

Division.	Number.	Names of the Proprietors.	Names of the Factories or Mehals in which they are situate.	Total Amount in Acres of each plantation.	Amount of land cleared in Acres.	Quantity of Tea produced in lbs. in the Season 1858-59.	Remarks.
Kamroop.	1	William Robinson, Esq. ...	Fatasil, Pergunnah Ramsah, ...	155 Acres.	35 Acres.	960 lbs.	For the year 1859.
	2	Ditto. ...	Ditto Desh Beltola, ...	460 „	5 „	None.	
	3	Mr. T. E. Pinto, ...	Kharghoolee Clearance Tea Garden,	222 „	30 „	1,600 „	
	4	Mr. C. W. Delanougerede, ...	Ramsah Tea Garden, ...	144 „	27 „	1,040 „	
	5	Mr. Bruce, ...	Chandreeparah ditto, ...	186 „	10 „	None.	
	6	Mr. A. Michel, ...	Fatasil, ...	253 „	30 „	480 „	
	7	Mr. J. R. D. Cameron, ...	Ditto, ...	136 „	5 „	None.	
	8	Mr. J. P. Wise, ...	Moreapore, ...	1,204 „	125 „	480 „	
	9	William Becher, Esq. ...	Kharghoolee, ...	121 „	30 „	1,600 „	
	10	Ditto, ...	Bordoar, ...	9,326 „	None.	None.	
			Total, ...	12,207 Acres.	297 Acres.	6,160 lbs.	
Durrung.	11	Mr. J. N. Martin, ...	Baleeparah, ...	387½ Acres.	187½ Acres.	16,000 lbs.	For the year 1859.
	12	Mr. J. N. Martin, and Son, ...	Hollessur, ...	200 „	100 „	880 „	
	13	Assam Company, ...	Singri, ...	3,196¼ „	87½ „	6,400 „	
			Total, ...	3,783¾ Acres,	375 Acres.	23,280 lbs.	
Nowgong.	14	H. Burkinyoung, Esq. ...	Nomoligur in Mehal Morung, ...	1,020 Acres.	Unknown.	48,000 lbs.	For the year 1859.
	15	G. Williamson, Esq. ...	Mehal Kulliabur, Mouza Chillabanda,	500 „			
	16	J. Herriot, Esq. ...	Mehal Jumoona Mookh, Mouzah Neez Duboka, ...	700 „			
	17	Mr. Stewart, ...	Mehal Morung, Kismut Punka, ...	296 „			
	18	Paterson Saunders, Elder, ...	Mehal Duntipar, Mouzah Nelly, ...	1,135 „			
	19	G. R. Barry, Esq. ...	Bhalleogooree and Rungagora, ...	1,406 „			
	20	J. Herriot, Esq. ...	Mehal Mekinpar, Mouzah Kotiatolly,	2,173 „			
	21	Ditto, ...	Kotiatolly and Bhelleogooree, ...	466 „			
	22	Mr. R. Spears, ...	Mehal Morung, ...	1,333 „			
	23	H. Partridge, Esq. ...	Rungajan in Mouzah Morungee, ...	293 „			
	24	Mr. Lyall, ...	Dukhin Kholah, ...	300 „			
	25	G. Williamson, Esq. ...	Mouzah Namdyang, ...	412 „			
	26	Ditto, ...	Ditto Rongoligur, ...	400 „			
	27	Ditto, ...	Ditto Kazeerunga, ...	600 „			
			Total, ...	11,034 Acres.	... ...	48,000 lbs.	

Tabular Statement of the Tea Factories established in Assam.—(Continued.)

Division.	Number.	Names of the Proprietors.	Names of the Factories or Mehals in which they are situate.	Total Amount in Acres of each Plantation.	Amount of land cleared in Acres.	Quantity of Tea produced in lbs. in the Season 1858-59.	Remarks.
Sibsagur.	28	Assam Company at Calcutta,...	Mouzah Nazerah, ...	181¼ Acres.	Extent of clearance at each factory is unknown. Total 3,967 acres.	Quantity of produce of each Factory is unknown. Total 6,93,249	For the year 1858.
	29		Ditto Dhopabur Cherie, ...	151¼ „			
	30		Dubba, ...	246¾ „			
	31		Katteepoottee, ...	220 „			
	32		Kacharee Pookhree, ...	492½ „			
	33		Moonaee Ting, ...	207½ „			
	34		Lingree Pookhree, ...	1,258¾ „			
	35		Gabooroo Purbut, ...	127½ „			
	36		Ditto ditto, ...	187½ „			
	37		Deo Panee, ...	186¼ „			
	38		Ditto, ...	375 „			
	39		Galakee ...	135 „			
	40		Mowdhoomnee ...	246¼ „			
	41		Roockang ...	313¾ „			
	42		Khurkatteea, ...	150 „			
	43		Jamoogooree, ...	400 „			
			Total, ...	4,778⅝ Acres.			
	44	Mr. Geo. Williamson, ...	Cinamara, ...	872 Acres.	343 Acres.	70,000 lbs.	
	45	Mr. J. E. Todd, ...	Noakacharie, ...	500 „	182 „	43,000 „	
	46	Mr. Spears, ...	Ningrie Ting, ...	1,200 „	313 „	40,000 „	
	47	Mr. Geo. Williamson, ...	Bengnakhoa, ...	407 „	117 „		
	48	Ditto, ...	Owa Ting, ...	490 „	100 „		
	49	Ditto, ...	Gilladhary, ...	244 „	100 „		
	50	Ditto, ...	Singloo, ...	260 „	25 „		
	51	Mr. R. Spears, ...	Khongeeah, ...	1,300 „	.....		
	52	Ditto, ...	Nohorunee, ...	667 „	.....		
	53	Mr. J. E. Todd, ...	Holongapar, ...	200 „	20 „		
	54	Ditto, ...	Deborapar, ...	200 „	30 „		
	55	H. Jenkins, Esq., ...	Khowang, ...	1,178 „	.....		
	56	Mr. Hassack, ...	Eta Barie, ...	700 „	30 „		
	57	Mr. R. D. Nuthall, ...	Jaipore, ...	400 „	.....		
	58	Mr. W. Straford, ...	Jrok, ...	400 „	.....		
			Total, ...	13,796¾ Acres.	5,227 Acres.	8,46,249 lbs.	

These have not yet yielded an out-turn.

LUCKIMPORE.	59	Assam Company, ...	Tingrai, ...	1,525	Acres.	400	Acres.	1,20,000	lbs.	For the year 1859.
	60	Messrs Warren and Jenkins, ...	Chahoah and Dikkun, ...	252	„	170	„	36,000	„	
	61	Colonel Hannay, ...	Dibroo Mottolah and Bazalam, ...	4,357	„	220	„	40,000	„	
	62	Messrs R. Barry, ...	Maijan, ...	1,890	„	170	„	.....		
	63	Messrs Higgs, Melang and Sevenoaks, ...	Maunkutto, ...	1,540	„	150	„	12,000	„	
	64	Colonel Reid, ...	Sook Doongiah, ...	899	„	130	„	12,000	„	
	65	Messrs H. Melang, ...	Bakparah, ...	294	„	70	„	6,000	„	
	66	„ G. R. Barry, ...	Bor Borooah, ...	1,058	„	160	„	8,000	„	
	67	„ Barry and Wagentriber,	Nagaghooli, ...	937	„	150	„	7,000	„	
	68	„ A. C. Campbell and Co,	Deoball, ...	1,286	„	80	„	5,000	„	
			Total, ...	14,038	„	1,700	„	2,82,000	„	
			Grand Total, ...	54,859½	Acres.	7,599	Acres.	12,05,689	lbs.	

GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S AGENT'S OFFICE,
NORTH EASTERN-FRONTIER,
The 11*th November* 1859.

F. JENKINS, *Colonel,*
Agent, Governor-General.

From E. H. LUSHINGTON, ESQ., Offg. Secretary to the Government of Bengal, to the Agent to the Governor-General, North-Eastern Frontier,—No. 203, dated Head Quarters, Chota Nagpore, the 20th January 1860.

SIR,—I AM directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letters of the numbers and dates noted on the margin, submitting Reports on the state of the Tea cultivation in the Province of Assam, and recommending the following measures for increasing the cultivation of Tea, *viz.*:—

No. 111, dated 24th October 1859, with a Map.
No. 118, dated 11th November 1859, with enclosure.

1*st*. To prohibit the cultivation of Opium in Assam.

2*nd*. To allow Grantees of Land for Tea cultivation to redeem the land tax.

3*rd*. To increase greatly the Revenue assessment on all other cultivated land.

2. As regards the first of these proposed measures, the question appears to the Lieutenant-Governor to turn on this, is it *practicable* in Assam to put a stop to the cultivation of Opium, supplying its place in the same manner as in other parts of India, by Abkaree Opium taxed as elsewhere?

3. The question, it appears, was before Government as far back as in 1840, when, on a full consideration of the opinions given for and against the measure, Government decided against interfering with the Poppy cultivation in Assam.

4. Here the question rested for nearly twelve years, when it was again agitated by the Assam Civil Officers supported by Mr. Mills and the Board of Revenue, who were unanimously in favor of such interference.

5. The late Lieutenant-Governor in a Minute dated the 16th April 1855, recorded his opinion, that to prohibit the cultivation of Opium in such a sparingly cultivated country as Assam, with a scanty population of migratory habits, and having sequestered churs and scattered cultivation in the midst of forests, was simply impossible, and that the measure, if attempted, would fail, both as a financial measure, and as a check on the immoderate use of Opium in that province.

6. This opinion is supported in the above-mentioned Minute with great force and effect. The Lieutenant-Governor entirely agrees in the

argument therein maintained, that to attempt arbitrarily to prohibit the consumption of Opium in Assam would be unwise and wrong. He holds that such an attempt would be indefensible, not only for the reasons advanced in the above-mentioned Minute, but also because no intelligible reason can be assigned for treating Assam differently in this respect, from the rest of the Indian Empire. But there is now no question of prohibiting consumption. The present question is the introduction into Assam of the system of excise upon Opium which is in operation in all other parts of India. And unless some specialty can be shown in regard to Assam, which does not exist elsewhere, and which is such as to prevent regulations elsewhere found to work well, from working well in this province, there can be no good ground for refusing to introduce the general system there. The only specialty which has been relied on in support of the exceptional treatment of Assam in this respect, is the assumed impossibility of effectually preventing the cultivation of the Poppy in this province. But whether this assumption is or is not well founded, is a question that can only be certainly determined by experiment.

7. With every respect for the conclusion at which the Government arrived in 1855, it seems to the Lieutenant-Governor that on such a question the local Officers should be best informed. If therefore you and the District Officers subordinate to you, feel yourselves in a position to assure the Lieutenant-Governor, that you have the power practically to enforce the prohibition, he will be prepared to sanction the attempt being made. For such a measure would be consistent with the policy adopted, and found to work well in all other parts of India; it has been supported by a long succession of experienced Officials; and it is now recommended by all the local Officers without exception, and by independent European gentlemen connected with Assam, as a very desirable measure, on what appear to the Lieutenant-Governor reasonable and substantial grounds.

8. The Lieutenant-Governor will be glad to be informed what effect on the local cultivation of the drug the increasing demand for Abkaree Opium may have had. From the accompanying table, the sales of Opium in some of the Districts appear to have nearly doubled since the introduction of this sort of Opium; and the Lieutenant-Governor understands

that a still greater increase would have been shown in some of the late sales had there been a supply sufficient to meet the demand. As Behar Opium, though heavily taxed, has thus been found to meet a ready sale in Assam, there is now less reason than there once was to doubt the practicability of preventing the local manufacture.

9. This table seems to show that the exceptional treatment of Assam in respect to Opium, cannot be supported by the anticipation of the failure, in a financial view, of the introduction of the general system into that province. Where a respectable and increasing revenue is derived from Abkaree Opium, when the local manufacture of the drug is free, and untaxed, it can hardly be doubted that there will be an increase of that revenue if the local manufacture is to any material extent suppressed, even though we may fail in preventing it wholly. Nor does the Lieutenant-Governor see reason to doubt that if the suppression of the local manufacture to a material extent be practicable, the Abkaree system will operate in Assam as elsewhere, to a certain degree as a check on the abuse of this luxury. He does not see force in the argument which has been much relied upon, that there is inconsistency in allowing the sale of excisable Opium, and prohibiting untaxed local manufacture. The object is not to prohibit, but to restrain consumption within practicable and legitimate limits, so far as possible. It may be impossible to enforce prohibition; and if possible, it might be wrong to do so; but it may nevertheless be as right, in Assam as elsewhere, upon moral grounds, apart from financial objects, to impose such check on consumption as an excise affords. When Opium cannot be got without paying a considerable price in money for it, there is some reason to hope that people will cease to give it to their children, and that those unable to afford themselves a sufficiency of food, will no longer resort to it so freely as heretofore: and it is with these two classes that Opium eating is shown to be certainly, necessarily, and uniformly a mischievous abuse.

10. In regard to the second measure, *viz.* that Grantees should have the power to redeem the land tax—I am desired to state, that the Lieutenant-Governor fully agrees in the propriety of the measure, though he does not expect that owners would avail themselves largely of the privilege in Assam, or elsewhere, money being too valu-

able to persons engaged in agricultural and commercial speculations in India, to warrant its being largely invested by such persons at a comparatively low rate of interest. The general question is already under the consideration of Government.

11. With respect to the third proposed measure, I am desired to say that the Lieutenant-Governor agrees with you. The land revenue should be fixed at a proper rate, on general considerations. And the proposal to drive established cultivators away from the cultivation of their land for grain and other ordinary food crops, by imposing on them an inordinate assessment for the purpose of forcing them to work for their subsistence as the laborers of Tea planters, is one that cannot be entertained for a moment.

12. It is manifest that the great want is a sufficiency of labor for the proper cultivation of land already obtained for, and in part planted with Tea, and for the proper gathering and manufacture of the leaves. This is work in which the men, women and grown children of a whole family can be employed; and it is therefore most favorable for the importation of labor at a moderate charge, and the fixing of a new laboring population in the neighbourhood of the Tea plantations. It is also found that the profit of Tea cultivation is such as richly to repay an adequate expenditure in increasing it. This state of things indicates the propriety of high wages; and the generally scanty population of Assam, its remote position, and its difficulty of access for poor people from the populous parts of India, indicate the expediency of having resort to a systematic course of proceeding in the importation of labor from other parts of India. But it is not for Government but for those immediately interested in the Tea plantations of Assam, to apply themselves to this as to all other requirements of their position. If they do so, they may be sure that whatever Government can legitimately do to facilitate their endeavours, will be readily done.

13. It is supposed by some that the wages offered for laborers in Tea plantations are not high enough. How this may be, your letters under acknowledgment do not show, and the Lieutenant-Governor does not know. But certainly if upon the sudden springing up of

a new and very profitable cultivation and manufacture, requiring a very large number of hands, wages were offered in Assam, where the extreme scantiness of the population is the most extraordinary feature of the place, on the principle that what are good wages in Bengal must be sufficient wages in Assam, a great mistake would be made. At this moment it is understood that a laboring man can earn in the Railways in the neighbourhood of the capital four Rupees a month, or more; and these Railways are in the midst of a dense population, and are very much nearer the great markets of surplus labor than Assam is. Taking these circumstances into consideration, a comparison of the rate above-mentioned and the rates actually paid by Tea Planters in Assam, will enable you to judge how far the difficulty still experienced of obtaining a sufficiency of labor for their work, can be regarded as a difficulty which cannot be overcome by ordinary and natural means.

14. It appears to the Lieutenant-Governor that the Tea Planters in Assam might perhaps find it to their advantage to imitate the practice adopted by the Sugar Planters of Mauritius and other colonies, who systematically import, upon an immense scale, labor from India, under a well contrived and equitable system, which is equally advantageous to the Indian laborer and to the Colonial Planter. The system has succeeded because great pains are taken in the selection and transport of the men and families engaged; and because, as compared with Indian rates, very high wages are given. Probably also the good feeding ensured to the Immigrant Indian laborers, after their arrival in the Colonies, is an important element of the success which has attended their employment in the hard work of a Sugar plantation. The wages are five dollars a month, and very ample rations. As there is no sea voyage to Assam, and as small allotments of waste land could be easily given by Planters to families settling as laborers on their lands, which would help to maintain them comfortably, without taking up too much of their time in consideration of an engagement to labor, at good wages, for a definite and not excessive term, it may be expected that a much lower rate of pay would be a sufficient inducement to immigration into that province

than is necessary for the Colonies. But as a long and expensive river voyage must be made, it seems to the Lieutenant-Governor that the case requires some organized system, somewhat in the nature of the Indian Emigration system of Mauritius, and various other Sugar Colonies.

15. The Lieutenant-Governor requests that you will communicate these observations to the Assam Tea Planters, and invite them to take the question into consideration. Papers showing the Coolie Emigration system at present in force are herewith enclosed. If the Assam Tea Planters determine to organize a system somewhat of the same character ; and if a law for the regulation of such a system on sound and equitable principles should be found necessary, the Lieutenant-Governor will be prepared to move the Legislature for such a law.

16. The Lieutenant-Governor observes that it is proposed in Mr. Martin's letter submitted with your Report of the 11th ultimo, to exempt Tea from the usual duty of 3 per cent. on Exports. Such an exemption in favor of Tea was allowed by an order passed in 1843 when the cultivation of Tea in India was in its infancy. But the order of exemption ceased, as a matter of course, to have effect on the passing of the new Customs Act, which makes no exception in favor of Tea from the general rule of charging an Export duty of 3 per cent. on Exports. This trade happily, can no longer be treated as a mere experiment. Before determining on the question of special exemption, it is probable that the Government of India may wish to have before it some general information relative to the expenses, returns, and profits of the trade. You are requested to procure and submit information on this subject.

17. The Lieutenant-Governor believes that the time will soon come when Tea will be one of the chief Indian staples, and when it will be able to afford the small general Export duty imposed as well as most other articles of Export. But apart from the general question of Export duties, he is well inclined, in the present state of things, to recommend to the Government of India the special exemption of Tea from Export duty, at least for some definite term of years, if it can be shown that such exemption would have any appreciable effect in encouraging the cultivation.

Statement of Abkarry Opium Sales in Assam from 1851-52 *to* 1858-59 *inclusive.*

Districts.	1851-52.		1852-53.		1853-54.		1854-55.		1855-56.		1856-57.		1857-58.		1858-59.	
	Quantity.	Proceeds.	Quantity.	Proceeds.	Quantity.	Proceeds.	Quantity.	Proceeds.	Quantity.	Proceeds.	Quantity.	Proceeds.	Quantity.	Proceeds.	Quantity.	Proceeds.
	Mds. S. C.	Rs.	Mds. S. C.	Rs.	Mds. S. C.	Rs.	Mds. S. C.	Rs.	Mds. S. C.	Rs.	Mds. S. C.	Rs.	Mds. S. C.	Rs.	Mds. S. C.	Rs.
Goalparah, ..	105 6 0	42,060	100 28 0	40,280	102 10 0	40,900	118 30 0	47,500	133 25 0	53,450	160 11 0	64,110	117 18 0	46,980	90 26 0	36,260
Durrung, ..	13 31 0	5,510	7 28 0	3,080	3 33 0	1,580	12 18 0	4,980	19 3 0	7,630	19 32 0	7,920	31 0 0	12,400	28 18 0	11,380
Kamroop, ..	57 17 0	22,970	36 16 0	14,560	22 0 0	8,800	29 16 0	11,760	27 33 0	11,130	42 35 0	17,150	53 29 0	21,890	49 22 0	19,820
Luckimpore, ..	38 22 0	15,420	58 25 0	23,450	24 0 0	9,600	89 32 0	35,920	52 2 0	20,820	119 0 0	47,600	95 24 0	38,240	69 13 0	27,730
Nowgong, ..	34 31 0	13,910	9 23 0	3,830	6 19 0	2,590	19 34 0	7,940	11 8 0	4,480	30 26 0	12,260	35 26 0	14,260	29 16 0	11,760
Seebsagur, ..	52 5 0	20,850	33 25 0	13,450	14 16 0	5,760	50 17 0	20,170	76 14 0	30,540	75 1 0	30,010	53 7 0	21,270	87 0 0	34,800
	301 32 0	1,20,720	246 25 0	98,650	173 3 0	69,230	320 27 0	1,28,270	320 5 0	1,28,050	447 25 0	1,79,050	387 24 0	1,55,040	354 15 0	1,41,750

In the year 1851-52, the Abkarry Opium was first introduced generally into Assam. Previous to that, it had only been sent to Goalparah and Kamroop.

During all these years the selling price was 10 Rupees; in June 1859, it was raised to 14 Rupees.

A. EDEN,
Offg. Junior Secretary to the Board of Revenue.

The 22nd December 1859.

From COLONEL F. JENKINS, Agent to the Governor General, North-East Frontier, to E. H. LUSHINGTON, Esq., Officiating Secretary to the Government of Bengal —(No. 1, dated the 4th January 1860.)

SIR,—IN further continuation of my letter No. 118, of the 16th ultimo, I have the honor to submit a copy of a report from Captain Lloyd, Officiating Collector of Nowgong, No. 202 of the 19th idem, forwarding the correspondence as per margin, regarding the Tea plantations in his Division.

1 From Mr. J. R. Barry of Serajgunge, proprietor of two or three of the plantations in the District, dated the 22nd October.
2. From Mr. Masters, Sub-Assistant, No. 42 of the 22nd November, making a report on the progress of Tea cultivation in his Sub-Division.
3. From Mr. Higginson, Juggri Sing Factory.
4. From Mr. Partridge of Ranga Jan Factory.

2. I beg to call attention to Mr. Masters' report, which gives a very clear account of the progress of Tea cultivation within his Sub-Division.

3. From his 2nd paragraph it appears that about 550 acres are actually brought under Tea cultivation, and the Planters, he reports, are successfully extending their cultivation; and under the favorable circumstances of a soil and climate well adapted to the plant, the prospects of the Planters in the Eastern District of Nowgong seem to be in all respects promising.

Only two of the plantations within this Sub-Division appear to be as yet producing Tea—

Namely, Mr. Burkinyoung's Factory at Numilighur, which gave this season 52,000 lbs. of Tea;

And Mr. Stewart's Factory at Punkah, which yielded 2,500 lbs. during the same period.

The other Factories at Kuliabur, Sohobe, Rungajose, Namdyong, Hazaragho, Rungolee Ghur and Difboo, have all been recently taken up.

4. In his 5th paragraph, Mr. Masters suggests that were the Planters allowed the benefit of retaining one-tenth of their land under Forest, that it would be a considerable boon to them. Mr. Masters of course means that this tenth part should be counted as a part of the

clearances if properly attended to as a tree plantation. This suggestion appears to me a judicious one, and such as is likely to better the importance of timber-producing land to the factories in a very short time, both for the purpose of procuring charcoal and planks for Tea boxes, that, instead of compelling the Tea Planters to cut down the forests merely with a view to maintain their grants under the terms on which the land has been allowed to be occupied, I should strongly recommend that all the grantees should be allowed to retain one-fifth or one-fourth of the whole grant under forest, but liable to a certain rent, say half rent after the term of ten years. Tea manufacture requires a vast extent of forest land for its supply of timber, and without some encouragement of this kind is allowed, in the course only of a few years, there will be great difficulty in procuring that supply, and of course the price of the Tea must be much enhanced.

5. Under the present terms of the grants, many of the Planters will be forced to destroy the forest to make a show of having brought their lands under cultivation, but it is obviously the interest of the Planters, and no less so of the Government, to encourage the preservation of useful timber.

From CAPTAIN E. P. LLOYD, Officiating Collector, Nowgong, Assam, to COLONEL F. JENKINS, Commissioner of Assam,—(No. 202, dated the 19th December 1859.)

SIR,—In continuation of this Office letter No. 165, of the 28th October last, I have the honor to enclose the letters in original from the individuals as noted in the margin, which will furnish you with additional information, regarding the progress made in the Tea plantations in this District as required in your communication No. 470 of the 11th September last. A Mr. Herriot, who has nearly 4,000 acres of land, has not yet supplied his report though repeatedly called for from him.

Letter dated 27th October 1859, from Mr. G. R. Barry with the Reports received from his Agent at Somoogooree in Bengali; Letter No. 42, dated 22nd November 1859, from J. W. Masters, Sub-Assistant Commissioner Golaghat; Letter dated 29th November 1859, from Mr. W. E. Higginson, of Negri Ting Factory, and also letter No. 51, dated 9th December 1859, from Mr. J. W. Masters, Sub-Assistant Commissioner, with Mr. H. T. Partridge's letter, dated 7th December 1859.

2. The return of the original letters herewith forwarded is respectfully solicited.

From G. R. BARRY, Esq., to CAPTAIN E. P. LLOYD, Collector of Zillah Nowgong, Central Assam,—(dated the 27th October 1859.)

SIR,—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 155, of the 13th instant, and in reply beg to state that according to the information sent me, I have fifty Poorahs planted out in Tea at Samoogooree, and 140 acres at Doboka, and would beg to refer you to the Managers in charge of the barrees for any further information you may require. The above extent of cultivation has been put in during the last two years. During the present cold season, one hundred acres will be added to the garden. I should have had great pleasure in giving you the information called for myself, but regret that I am not in a position to do so, not having seen the barrees since clearances were commenced two years ago, but I have no doubt that Mr. Herriot who has a share in the Doboka Garden, will give you all the information you require from that quarter. At Samoogooree, I have hitherto had a Gomastah in charge, Baboo Dhermo Dutt Sermono, but Mr. Wills, a young gentleman I have just engaged to take charge of the factory, will be there immediately, if indeed he has not already taken charge.

From Mr. J. W. MASTERS, Sub-Assistant Commissioner, Golaghat, to CAPTAIN E. P. LLOYD, Collector, Nowgong,—(No. 42, dated the 22nd November 1859.)

SIR,—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 152, dated the 13th ultimo, together with copy of letter No. 470 of the 11th of September last, to your address, from the Commissioner of Assam, and herewith to submit the report therein called for, relative to the success which has attended, and the effects which have resulted from the cultivation of the Tea plant in this Sub-Division, and to submit a few remarks on the measures which I think the Government may, without detriment or inconvenience, adopt to assist the Planters in extending their cultivation and manufacture. The delay which has occurred in submitting this report has been occasioned by the non-receipt of the necessary information from the parties concerned, some of whom have considered it incumbent on them to refer to Calcutta.

2. The whole extent of land already taken up for the purpose of Tea cultivation within this Sub-Division, including Rungligur and Koliabur, embraces about 4,000 acres, of which land to the extent of 2,200 acres has been taken up during the present year, and on this land, the operations of clearing the forest and sowing seed have commenced; only of the remaining 1,800 acres, land to the extent of 550 acres *is actually under Tea cultivation*, and the Planters are extending their operations by every available means in their power. Generally the attempt has been

eminently successful, the soil and the climate are both exceedingly well suited to preserve a healthy condition of the plant, and to the production of abundance of leaf.

3. Cultivation of the Tea plant has been commenced at the following plains :

Numulighur.—This grant contains 1,020 acres, and land to the extent of 241 acres is under Tea, which produced in 1859, 52,000 lbs. of Tea. Full information has not been yet received.

Mr. H. Burkinyoung.

Kuliabur.—Respecting this grant Mr. George Williamson remarks :—"The Kuliabur grant is not mine. I applied for it by virtue of a Power of Attorney from Mr. James Williamson. Mr. Lyell is in charge of the factory. The grant is about 500 acres, of which about 120 acres are now under Tea cultivation, and further extensions are being made this year."

Mr. James Williamson.

Punkah.—This grant contains 296 acres, and upwards of 120 acres are now actually under cultivation. Mr. Stewart observes, "I have not met with the success I had anticipated, mainly owing to the great difficulty of obtaining laborers sufficient to keep the gardens in proper cultivation, which circumstance nullifies all my endeavours to carry out the end I have in view, and prevents me from increasing the area of land under Tea. I had expected to obtain from the *Barrie* during this season upwards of 4,000 lbs. of Tea, but the gardens have been in dense jungle during the rains, and I shall only realize about 2,500 lbs. having, on account of the jungle, been unable to pluck the leaf for manufacture. Such being the case, I cannot venture to increase the area of the land now under cultivation."

Mr. C. W. Stewart.

Sokolee Dhunsiri Grant.—The actual extent of this grant is not yet decided on, and Mr. Spears is on his way to England ; a square mile has been applied for, clearing the forest has been commenced, and preparations for sowing seed are now going on.

Mr. R. Spears.

Rungajun.—This grant was taken up in February last, when the clearing the forest was commenced, and a portion of the land sown with Tea seed. The grant contains about 300 acres.

Mr. H. S. Partridge.

Mr. G. Williamson.

Namdyang Grant containing 300 acres ; Rungoligur, two grants, each containing about 200 acres = 400 acres.

Kazeeranga, three grants each containing about 200 acres = 600 acres, altogether about 1,300 acres, but the boundaries are not finally settled.

These five grants have all been taken up during the present year ; clearing the forest, and sowing seed have commenced. Mr. Williamson observes "Relative to

the success which has attended the cultivation of the Tea plant on lands held by me for that purpose, I beg leave to state, that my plantations are (with the exception of Cinnamara in the Jorehaut District) of too recent a formation to enable me to judge. Cinnamara was commenced in 1854, and there is now under Tea cultivation, 343 acres, from which area about 70,000 lbs. of Tea was produced last year, and about the same quantity this year. There would have been an increase of about 30,000 lbs. in the present season's crop, had a sufficient supply of labor been obtainable. On this Plantation the cultivation of the Tea plant has been successful, and the result satisfactory up to the present time, but the future prosperity of the factory will, I think, mainly depend on the success attending the importation of Emigrant laborers. Regarding the grants applied for by me in the Nowgong District, the aggregate area of the land is about 1,500 acres, of which about one-fourth will be cleared and planted with Tea seed by the month of March next. The Mikirs have entered into contracts to clear thirty Poorahs on each of the grants in the Mouzahs of Kazeeranga and Rangheghur, and I hope to be able to procure Assamese laborers sufficient to bring the cultivation up to fifty acres at each of those places by the above mentioned time. Godowns and other necessary buildings are now being erected, and Tea seed forwarded to plant the land.

Kaujeeranga and Homgoli Ghow.

At the Diphloo grant clearances were commenced in January last, and about seventy-two acres planted with Coffee and Tea seeds; more land is now being cleared, and the cultivation will be extended to about 100 acres by March next. A bungalow and other necessary buildings are now being erected.

Diphloo or Namdyang.

4. With regard to the effects of this cultivation on the people of the District, I consider that it has tended in an eminent degree to better their condition, to enable them to pay their revenue more easily, and to procure for themselves comforts and luxuries to which they were entire strangers twenty years ago; however, it does not appear to have rendered them more honest nor less addicted to Opium.

Effect of this cultivation.

5. With regard to the measures which the Government may, without detriment, adopt to assist the Planters in extending their cultivation and manufacture, I beg leave respectfully to submit, that I consider it would be a considerable advantage if each grantee was permitted to retain 10 per cent of his grant in forest; this portion to be regularly cultivated as *wood land*, the inferior kinds rooted out, and the better, and more useful

Measures of Government which would assist the Planters.

kinds planted. Under existing rules, the whole grant *must* be cleared of forest. The forests of Assam comprise by far the most valuable lands in the Province. In their present state they yield a considerable quantity of excellent timber, with a dense under wood suitable for fuel and various other purposes ; and when the forest is cleared away, and the land brought under cultivation, the soil is found to be rich, well suited to the Tea plant, and to almost every kind of permanent crop. The river land must still continue Rice land, and appears to be of no more value after 50 years' cultivation than at first. In fact, the most abundant crops are generally obtained during the first three or four years after breaking up the ground ; the grass plains, *Chapperies*, are almost entirely occupied by two coarse species of *Cacchorum*—the common *Ooloo* and *Barota*, the first is *Cacchorum cylindricum* of Roab. The *Boro*, *&c.*, is not described by Dr. Roxburgh, but is probably the plant alluded to by Mr. Griffith at page 78, Part 3 of his Posthumous paper No. 10. Cutting down, burning and common hoeing will not destroy these two grasses, but when their roots are entirely rooted out, the ground well cultivated and manured, the soil is often well suited to the cultivation of the Tea plant, and many of the best agricultural grasses will spontaneously spring up where the *Ooloo* and *Barota* previously grew. It would also be a great advantage, not only to the Planters, but also to the ryots generally if the roads were repaired and kept in good order. Under this head Mr. Williamson observes :—" As to the measures which the Government could adopt to assist the Tea Planters in extending the cultivation of the Tea plant, I think a moderate increase in the land revenue would in some degree tend towards this object and might be carried out without detriment. A decrease in the Opium cultivation would also cause a greater number of laborers to work on Tea plantations. A steady flow of emigrant labor into the Province is, I think, the principal means by which the cultivation of the Tea plant can be extensively increased. An emigration scheme to be successful, would require to be conducted under the auspices of Government, and a fund for the purpose provided by the Tea Planters." Mr. Stewart remarks to the same effect, adding, " by issuing more stringent laws to compel laborers and contractors to respect their agreements, and a summary mode of proceeding against them when they do not do so, and when they desert the factories ; as at present numbers of them do with very large advances in hand, whenever they please ; thereby causing great loss to the Planters, who, before they can obtain legal redress from the Courts as at present constituted, most of their crops perish before their eyes, with no other means at hand of saving the same."

Replies from Mr. Burkinyoung, Mr. Partridge, and Mr. Spears, have not yet been received. Immediately they come to hand, I will forward them in original.

From W. E. HIGGINSON, Esq., Negri Ting Factory, to J. W. MASTERS, Esq., Sub-Assistant Commissioner of Golah Ghat,—(dated the 29th November 1859.)

SIR,—In reply to your service letter No. 33, dated 22nd October 1859, to the address of Mr. Spears, I beg to state that the quantity of land at present under Tea cultivation on this factory is about 350 acres, nearly all of which is in full bearing.

We will push on with the other grants as fast as the local supply of labor will admit, and arrangements are likely to be made in Calcutta for the establishment of an Agency for the supply of Bengali labor.

2. With reference to the 2nd paragraph, calling for my remarks relative to the measures which the Government could adopt to assist the Tea Planters, I would beg leave to suggest that the cultivation of Opium be prohibited. The cultivation and use of this drug have of late years increased considerably, and result in the injury of the people; and thousands who have within a short time past, fallen victims to this dreadful drug, would otherwise be much benefited. I would further suggest that the land revenue be increased; this would throw more labor into the market and the couched laborer, who at the present state of things does just enough to keep himself alive to the end of each year, would be compelled to become industrious to obtain cash, both to protect himself from the land revenue as well as enable him to purchase the genuine Opium from the Government; and as it seems to be the wish of Her Majesty's Secretary of State, and His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal to assist the Tea Planters to extend the cultivation and manufacture of Tea, the removal of the Export duty, which adds but little to the general revenue, would be considered a boon to the Planter. In reply to the concluding paragraph, I beg to petition, with reference to Mr. Spears' letter of the 26th January last, to the address of Captain Comber, that a grant of land of one thousand acres may be made to this factory in the Secolee Mouza (Mouzadar Morungqua Gohain) the clearance of this grant of land in question commenced on the 20th October last.

From J. W. MASTERS, Esq., Sub-Assistant Commissioner of Golah Ghat,—(dated the 1st December 1859.)

FORWARDED in original to the Collector of Nowgong this day.

From J. W. MASTERS, Esq., Sub-Assistant Commissioner of Golah Ghat, to CAPT. E. P. LLOYD, Collector, Nowgong,—(No. 51, dated the 9th December 1859.)

SIR,—With reference to my letter No. 4½ of the 22nd ultimo, I have now the honor to forward a letter dated the 7th instant, from Mr. H. S. Partridge of Burgajan Tea factory.

From H. S. PARTRIDGE, Esq., to J. W. MASTERS, Esq., Sub-Assistant Commissioner, Golah Ghat, Assam,—(dated the 7th December 1859.)

SIR,—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 31, dated the 22nd October 1859, requesting information concerning the success which has attended the cultivation of Tea by me, &c., to which I now beg leave to reply.

2. The quantity of land held by me at the Rongajan is 293 acres, of which about thirty acres were cleared and sown by me last season. I am sorry I cannot say much regarding the success which has attended my venture, for, owing to the lateness of the season when the land was cleared and sown, I could not make arrangements for procuring labor sufficient to keep even that small area of land under proper cultivation during the late rains; and now that the garden has again been cleared, I find that a large proportion of the seedlings have been choked by the weeds. I am now making arrangements for clearing and sowing fifty acres more of the land this season.

3. The great and only drawback to the cultivation of Tea in this District is the want of labor, and I beg to state the measures which it seems to me the Government might adopt to assist us if so inclined.—1st. by raising the land rent on Rice and other lands 3½ or 4½ per acre, and to much more for Opium lands, so as to decrease the cultivation of that drug in Assam, while Government Opium could be supplied to be purchased by those who could not do without it. This would cause more laborers to work in the Tea plantations for ready cash.

4. By issuing more strict laws for compelling laborers and contractors to respect their agreements and a shorter mode of proceeding against them when they do not do so.

From J. W. MASTERS, Esq., Sub-Assistant Commissioner, Golah Ghat, Assam, (dated the 9th December 1859.)

FORWARDED in original to the Collector of Nowgong.

From COLONEL F. JENKINS, Agent, Governor General, North-East Frontier, to E. H. LUSHINGTON, Esq., Officiating Secretary to the Government of Bengal,—(No. 12, dated 28th January 1860.)

SIR,—With reference to the 4th paragraph of my letter No. 1, of the 4th instant, forwarding additional correspondence regarding the Tea plantations of Nowgong, I have the honor to forward a copy of a letter

No. 228, of the 18th instant, from Captain Holroyd, Principal Assistant in charge of the Seebsaugur Division, bringing forward a proposition to the same effect as that suggested by Mr. Masters, *viz.*, that the Tea Planters should be encouraged to reserve a part of their grants under forest, in order to make a provision for the supply of timber that they will therefore require for packing boxes.

2. Captain Holroyd proposes that one-fourth of the whole grant should, for this purpose, be allowed to count as cultivation, and to be taxed as cultivated ground at full rates, but Captain Holroyd does not say after what period it should be brought under taxation. My proposition in the letter above quoted was, that this reserved forest land should be taxed at half rates after a free period of ten years.

3. But I cannot but think that the most acceptable arrangement which the Government can authorize will be to allow the grantees to purchase the fee simple of their lands at a moderate sum, as advocated in the 15th and 16th paragraphs of my letter to you, No. 111, of the 24th October last, and as far as my judgment goes, this measure is consistent with the true policy of Government, as permitting the unrestrained employment of capital. I beg removing from the Planters all terms and restrictions, and freeing them from the heavy anxiety which some of the clauses of the grant must necessarily now impose on them.

From CAPTAIN C. HOLROYD, Collector of Seebsaugur, to COLONEL F. JENKINS, Commissioner of Revenue, Gowhatty,—(No. 228, dated the 18th January 1860.)

SIR,—With reference to the provisions of the present rules for the grant of waste lands in Assam, I would draw your attention to the fact of the essentiality when such grants are taken for the purposes of Tea cultivation, that a portion of the land should be reserved for timber and bamboos, required in the packing and manufacture of the Tea.

2. At present on first formation of a factory, timber is felled recklessly and generally burnt, afterwards, when required for Tea boxes, it is cut wherever found, without reference to being within or without the bounds of a grant ; and I foresee that in a few years the fine tracts of forest, which are now available for settlers, will be completely ruined.

3. To obviate this, I would propose the following amendment in the present rules. One-fourth the grant is exempted from assessment for roads, houses, &c. and the remaining three-fourths has, within the given periods, to be brought under cultivation. From enquiry I find that were two-fourths brought under cultivation, and the remaining one-fourth retained in forest for timber and bamboo, it would suffice for the requirements of a Tea Factory, provided the Planters, as he felled his trees sowed seed to replace them ; the trees best adapted for Tea boxes arrive at a fit stage for cutting within five years, and it is calculated that replacing by seed annually the trees as cut, the one-fourth of the land retained in forest would suffice for the requirements of the Tea Factory. This one-fourth allowed to be retained in forest, and considered under the terms of the grant as under cultivation, I do not propose to free from assessment, but it should be assessed as the remaining two-fourths actually cultivated. If this recommendation be adopted, as I hope it may be, feeling convinced it is essentially necessary for the future prosperity of the Province, grantees should be given to understand they are not at liberty to cut timber wherever they choose over the face of the land ; but must confine their operations to the limits of their grants.

4. With regard to the old grants held by the Assam Company, in which the cultivation has been extended to the three-fourths as required by the terms of the grant, I would propose, in such instances, they be allowed to take up the land adjoining the grants, or in the nearest available forest to the extent of the one-fourth ratio, it being held as an integral portion of the individual factories, and the grant dated back to such period as the time when the grant for the factory was given.

5. To carry out the proposal now submitted, it will only be necessary to add a clause to the effect, that of the three-fourths required to be cultivated, one-fourth would be allowed to be held under timber, and considered as cultivation.

From Lord H. U. Browne, Under-Secretary to the Government of Bengal, to the Agent to the Governor-General, North-East Frontier, (No. 483. Fort William, the 19th March 1860.)

Sir,—I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letters Nos. 1 and 12, dated the 4th and 20th January last, and in reply to state, that the proposal of allowing a proportion of each grant to remain permanently in forest, seems one well worthy of consideration.

2. The conditions under which grants in Assam and elsewhere shall be made, are now under consideration, and will be finally determined by the Governor-General in Council. The proposal will be considered in the settlement of the general question.

From COLONEL F. JENKINS, Agent to the Governor General, North-East Frontier, to E. H. LUSHINGTON, Esq., Officiating Secretary to the Government of Bengal,—(No. 22, dated the 29th February 1860.)

SIR,—Adverting to your letter No. 203, of the 20th ultimo, and to my letters therein quoted, on the progress of Tea cultivation in Assam, I have the honor to forward a copy of a letter from Mr. Roberts, Managing Director of the newly formed Jorehaut Tea Company, of the 23rd ultimo, on the progress of Tea cultivation in the Numolighur Factory, one of the plantations purchased by this Association.

2. This plantation was first taken up for the purpose of cultivating Sugar-cane, and was subsequently converted into a Tea plantation for the reason assigned in Mr. Roberts' 8th paragraph. It is now a flourishing Tea factory, 240 acres of land being under Tea plant, (which yielded last year 52,000lbs. of Tea) and a fire-proof godown having been erected for the manufacture of Tea and its safe custody.

3. The Government will be pleased at observing from the 6th paragraph of Mr. Roberts' letter, that arrangements have been made by an association of gentlemen for organizing a system of Coolie Emigration to Assam, to which in his 10th paragraph the Government is solicited to give its assistance.

4. The papers referred to in the 15th paragraph of your letter No. 203, with the observations of the Hon'ble the Lieutenant-Governor on the subject of the Emigration of Coolies, have already been circulated to the principal Tea Planters, and I hope at an early date to be able to submit a further communication on this subject to Government.

5. It will be observed that Mr. Roberts, in his 11th paragraph, adverts to the privilege of purchasing the fee simple of their grants as being one of the measures by which the Government could best promote the interests of the Tea Planters; and so general is this feeling, that I

would beg to solicit the early consideration of Government, to the terms on which the Planters might be allowed the option of reducing the land tax of their grants.

6. Mr. Roberts, in his 12th paragraph, touches on the expediency of restricting the growth of Poppy in Assam. The printed correspondence alluded to therein has not reached me.

7. And in his concluding paragraph he offers a suggestion as to the advantage of Government extending encouragement to the establishment of an efficient Steam Company for the Berhampooter, on the same principle as has been adopted for raising funds for Railways and Canals in other parts of India.

8. With reference to the 13th paragraph of your letter before quoted, I would beg to mention here, that the rate of wages prevailing at the Tea factories, is from 4 to 5 Rupees a month, which with reference to the rate of wages earned formerly by our Assamese laborers in an immense advance, being nearly a fully double the hire formerly attained. But the women and lads employed in picking the leaves, who do that work by contract, can readily earn, for the season, double the above rates of wages.

9. It is perhaps, however, a mistake to suppose that the great rise in wages in Assam is mainly attributable to the demand for labor at the Tea factories. I find in Cooch Behar that there has been the same, and fully an equal rise in laborers' wages in that District. This is certainly not owing to any great Public Works being carried on in the neighbourhood, or by the establishment of any factories, Indigo, Sugar or Tea, for none such exist in the whole country. The Works of the Rajah, I found, were almost totally stopped from want of laborers, and the high price necessary to obtain any workmen was a subject of grievous complaints by all the Officers of the Government.

On enquiring to what the deficiency of labor was owing, the immediate reply was, the extension of agriculture and the increased profits to the ryots from the cultivation of Mustard, Jute and Tobacco, and I think the same cause will be found to have made labor so expensive in Assam, *viz.*—the vast extension of the Mustard crop, the culture of

which is both very easy and remunerative, and the high profits from it, and the great advance in the price of Rice, have no doubt much to do with the want of labor in Assam. Every one of our laborers being also a cultivator of his own fields, he is of course only to be prevailed on to leave his village, and his own work, for a rate of wages, that is greatly more than he could earn by his labor at home.

10. This state of things, arising out of an immensely increasing commerce, is more or less prevailing, if I be not mistaken, throughout Bengal, and can only be remedied extensively by the introduction of machinery and substitutes for manual labor; and I was much gratified to find that in Cooch Behar since my last visit, this substitution was taking place to a very great extent by the introduction of carts. These carriages are now largely employed for the first time within my knowledge for the carriage of agricultural produce to the river ghauts, and will, no doubt, be a very sensible relief to the great trade in bulky articles going forward.

11. The same resolution will, no doubt, be gradually introduced into Assam, where hundreds of thousands of laborers are daily employed in transporting the produce of their fields to the granaries, markets and ghauts, as I have more than once adverted to, in advocating the speedy construction of roads in Assam. In Cooch Behar and the neighbouring Bengal Districts, carts can almost travel any where, whether roads be made or not from the dryness of the sandy soil, and the shallowness of the streams, but unfortunately this is not the case in Assam; in the deep mould and retentive clogs of Assam, which makes every unraised road impassable with a slight fall of rain, and renders every water-course, however small, perfectly impracticable for wheeled carriages without bridges, the introduction of these vehicles can only take place except in a very small degree, as the Government prepare the means of locomotion by providing embanked and bridged roads.

12. Frequent advertence has been made to this necessity, and Government have frequently shown a disposition to meet our wants; but up to this time some unexpected financial pressure has always diverted the general funds from being expended on the required local improve-

ments of this Province, and I fear we shall have to record the same indefinite postponement of our hopes until the Government are able to allow us to apply a portion of our local revenues to local improvements.

13. As far as regards the Tea Planters, they have been adopting from the first, the use of Elephant carts for the transport of Tea to the ghauts; and in the Jorehaut and Luckimpore Districts, their want of roads have been in great measure attended to, but as yet I think they have done little in setting an example to the Assamese in the use of carriage bullocks or bullock carts, which alone can be made available for the uses of the agricultural population, and this only, to a partial extent, until we have a better system of roads.

From W. ROBERTS, Esq., Managing Director, Jorehaut Tea Company, Limited, to J. W. MASTERS, Esq., Sub-Assistant Commissioner, Ghola Ghaut,—(dated the 23rd January 1860.)

SIR,—Owing to the disposal of the Numolighur Factory to the Jorehaut Tea Company, Limited, your communication, No. 31, of October 1859, to the address of C. H. Stewart, Esq., Numolighur, has not met with prompt attention, but I have now the honor, as Managing Director of the Company, to reply to the several enquiries it contains.

2. The cultivation of the Tea Plant at Numolighur was considerably retarded in the first instance; and a successful result was not realized to so great an extent as it might have been, owing to the necessity of having to sow the Tea seed in lands, that had become partially exhausted by the cultivation of Sugar-cane.

3. The quantity of land held under the Government Pottah No. 1, of the 19th December 1855, amounts to 1026 acres, and under a separate annual rent-paying pottah, there are about 30 acres of land on an adjoining hill.

4. The actual area of land under the cultivation of the Tea plant is 240 acres.

5. The produce of 1859, amounted to lbs. 52,000 of Tea.

6. It has been found a very difficult matter to carry out measures for the extension or improvement of the cultivation, entirely owing to the inadequate supply of labor, which, for years past, has restricted the extension of the clearances, and has prevented the adoption of a proper system of cultivation. With the object of lessening this difficulty, a number of gentlemen who are interested in the cultivation of the Tea plant, established a Tea Planter's Association in December last for the purpose, amongst others, of organizing a system of Coolie Emigration from the Districts of Lower Bengal; a sufficient time has not yet elapsed to complete the necessary arrangements, but in order to carry out the system upon an extensive scale, it would be essential to have the means of forwarding the Coolies to their destination, by Steamers and Flats starting from Calcutta, at regular and stated periods. If the Prospectus issued by the Assam and Dacca Steam Company had met with the support that it merited, the communication with the Province would have been established and maintained at regular intervals.

7. A pucka Tea house covered with a corrugated iron roof, has been erected at the factory. A steam engine and machinery, adapted for manufacturing Sugar are also on the factory.

8. The cultivation of the Sugar-cane was abandoned for many reasons, but not because the cultivation of Tea was more remunerative. The soil and climate appeared to be well adapted for the growth of Sugar-cane. The juice that it yielded however was very week and impure, and consequently very difficult to treat; and although no expense was spared in purchasing machinery and in procuring experienced Sugar manufacturers, yet success did not attend the efforts of the proprietors,—the paucity of laborers was an insurmountable difficulty,—and from the laborious nature of the work, compared with the cultivation of Tea lands, the cultivation of Sugar-cane could not be maintained in an efficient state. The distance from Calcutta without regular Steam communication, was a serious drawback; for the greatest delay occurred in having repairs effected to the machinery, upon which, in some instances, depended the manufacturing or saving of the crop. The complicated machinery, the scientific knowledge and number of practical artizans required

to conduct the various operations, cannot be maintained in an efficient condition in Assam, to which there has been as yet no regular means of transit.

9. With reference to the measures that Government could adopt to assist in extending the cultivation of Tea, or of any other product in Assam, they may be briefly enumerated as follows,—all of which can be adopted, not only without detriment or inconvenience to the Government, but they will materially assist in developing the rich resources of the Province, by which Government will realize very many and important advantages.

10. The first and most pressing measure would be to assist the Tea Planters' Association, in the efforts which are now being made to establish a system of Coolie Emigration from Bengal, by rendering whatever assistance Government may deem necessary or prudent, in the collection, examination, and despatch of the Coolies, by placing a sufficient number of efficient Steamers and Flats on the Berhampooter river, to keep up a regular monthly communication, until the efforts of the Planters have succeeded in forming a Steam Company for their own purposes.

11. If the foregoing measure was carried out by the Government, the next in importance would be to allow settlers in Assam to purchase the fee simple of the land required for their operations, and to allow the present grantees to acquire the fee simple of their estates upon equitable terms.

12. The next measure requiring the consideration of Government, is the restriction of Opium cultivation in Assam. This question has been so ably advocated by the Assam Company, that I beg leave to hand you a printed copy of the correspondence between Government and the Assam Company on the subject. If the emigration of Coolies from Bengal was successfully carried out, it would, in a great measure, remove the necessity of imposing any restriction upon the cultivation of the Poppy,—for Planters would not then be so dependent upon the local labor,—but in a moral point of view, it would nevertheless be most

important for Government to adopt some measures, that would effectually prevent or remove the rising generation in Assam,—children from seven to ten years of age,—from partaking of, and indulging in, that injurious and intoxicating drug.

13. Finally, I would beg leave to suggest for the consideration of the Government, whether it would not be advantageous to guarantee a certain rate of interest, upon the capital required to establish an efficient Steam Company, on the Berhampooter river, similar to the system now adopted for raising funds for the construction of Canals, Roads, &c.

From RIVERS THOMPSON, Esq., Junior Secretary to the Government of Bengal, to the AGENT TO THE GOVERNOR GENERAL, North-East Frontier.—(No. 733, Fort William, the 15th April 1860.)

SIR,—I AM directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 22, dated the 29th February last, submitting, with your observations, a copy of a letter from Mr. Roberts, the Managing Director of the newly formed Jorehaut Tea Company, relative to the progress of Tea cultivation in the Numolighur Factory, and to the measures that appear to be required for the extension of Tea cultivation in Assam, and for the general development of the resources of that Province.

2. The proposals submitted do not appear to differ materially from those that have already been under the notice of Government. As regards the chief desideratum, viz., an adequate supply of laborers, the Lieutenant Governor directs me to say that the Government will give any assistance it properly can to the scheme set on foot by the Tea Planters' Association for organizing a system of importing labor into Assam. It is only the want of available Steamers that prevents Government from maintaining a more frequent and regular communication by Steam between Calcutta and Assam.

3. It will be in your recollection that till April 1859, the exigencies of the Public Service did not admit of any relaxation in the restrictions which had been imposed on the Steam communication with the province of Assam. In that month, the exceptional state of things which had previously existed was brought to an end, and the exclusive

employment of Government Steamers on the Ganges became unnecessary. The Government of Bengal at once availed itself of the opportunity to move one Steamer and a Flat off the Ganges line, and to despatch them to Assam; and when a short time after, all the River Steamers and Flats were replaced by the Government of India at the disposal of the Lieutenant-Governor, instructions were issued to the Superintendent of Marine to lose no time in re-establishing the regular Steam communication with the North-Eastern Provinces. Though it was found impracticable at once to give effect to these orders from the insufficiency of the Boats at the Service of this Government, it was arranged in June last, that a Steamer and Flat were to be despatched to Assam at intervals of six weeks, until the addition to the Ganges Flotilla, already applied for, had been effected, when a regular monthly communication with Assam will be opened.

4. In accordance with this arrangement, the Boats named in the margin have been despatched to Assam on the dates specified, and as far as it was in the power of Government, a regular periodical communication has been maintained.

The *Berhampooter*,	10th July	1859.
„ „	13th September	1859.
„ *Indus*,	7th November	1859.
„ *Jumna*,	15th December	1859.
„ *Indus*,	1st February	1860.
„ *Jumna*,	15th March	1860.

5. The Lieutenant-Governor hopes that private enterprise will establish an effective system of Steam communication. But the proposal of a " guaranteed " Steam Company does not appear to him feasible.

6. On the point again raised regarding the purchase of the fee simple of grants of land, the Lieutenant-Governor directs me to refer you to what was said in the 10th paragraph of Mr. Officiating Secretary Lushington's letter, No. 203, of the 20th January last.

7. In regard to the want of roads, you are aware, the Lieutenant-Governor remarks, that the amount of imperial funds allotted for Works of internal improvement to the Lower Provinces of the Bengal Presidency is too small, in comparison with the vast extent of country to be benefitted, to enable the local Government to make perceptible progress towards the creation of a tolerable system of internal communication.

But if gentlemen interested in the improvement of Assam, and the many other great Provinces under the Bengal Government, think fit to move the Government of India for such an allotment of the imperial funds available to the Public Works Department for all India, as would give to the Bengal Provinces anything at all approaching to the proportion which the extent, the population, and the revenues of those Provinces may seem fairly to demand, such an appeal will not want all the support that the Lieutenant-Governor can give it. The Lieutenant-Governor has himself never omitted any opportunity of urging the justice and the true policy of more equitable arrangements in this respect than, as it appears to his judgment, have hitherto prevailed.

From COLONEL F. JENKINS, Agent to the Governor-General, North-East Frontier, to A. R. YOUNG, Esq., Secretary to the Government of Bengal,—(No. 79, dated the 31st May 1860.)

SIR,—IN continuation of the 4th paragraph of my letter No. 22, dated the 29th February last, and with advertence to the 15th paragraph of Mr. Secretary Lushington's No. 203, of the 20th January last, on the subject of organizing a system of Coolie Emigration, I have the honor to transmit the accompanying copy of a letter of the 19th instant, from Captain Morton, Principal Assistant, Luckimpore, forwarding the proceedings of a Committee of the several Tea Planters in that District, with reference to the above suggestion of Government.

2. The Committee strenuously deny that it is the wish of the Planters in Upper Assam to drive the ryots from the cultivation of their fields, in order to obtain the labor on the Tea plantations, but they urge the imposing a heavier tax on the ryots, that they might acquire habits of industry, in the belief, that eventually more land would be brought under cultivation.

In the 2nd Resolution the Committee state the present rate of wages to be Rupees 4-8 a month, and adverting to the advantages the imported Coolies would obtain from settling in Assam, they are of opinion that a higher rate of wages than 5 Rupees should not be offered them.

In their next Resolution the Committee, representing the Planters of the Luckimpore Division, pledge themselves to support any equitable scheme for the maintenance of a Government Emigration Agent, and suggest that:—

1*st.* The laborers should be engaged for a term of five years.

2*nd.* That the Law for the cognizance of breach of contract should be amended.

3*rd.* The commodious Steamers should be employed on this line, starting at regular intervals and importing Rice as well as laborers.

In their concluding Resolution the Committee bring to notice, the comparative small number of the inhabitants of the Luckimpore Division, who are employed at the plantations.

3. In submitting these Resolutions, Lieutenant Morton proposes that every Coolie employed on rent free land (I presume the Tea plantations are meant), should be subjected to a Poll Tax, unless they could satisfy the Collector on certain points, the object of which proposition appears to be explained in the following 4th paragraph,—that Natives should not take up grants merely for the purpose of settling on their lands ryots now fully assessed to Government.

And in the concluding paragraph, Lieutenant Morton mentions, that he is impressed with the belief that the Ryot in Assam is not sufficiently assessed, and that any man not cultivating to the extent of two Poorahs (about 2½ acres) should pay a Poll Tax.

4*th.* I cannot advocate Lieutenant Morton's propositions, which would certainly have one effect however carried out, of making Coolie labor more expensive and less easily procurable by the Planters.

5*th.* I have only further to remark an observation in the last Resolution of the Committee, of the small comparative number of Muttocks who work on Tea plantations.

I am not surprised at the fact alluded to; the Muttocks like all other classes of the people that I would call Assamese, that is, who have adopted Hinduism, object to leave their homes and will not take up labor at any distance from them. The Cacharees, who are without the pale

of Hinduism, have not this objection, or they have not the same habits as the Assamees, for some classes as the Mikirs and Merees who are not Hindoos, have the same dislike to go abroad to labor.

From CAPTAIN B. W. D. MORTON, Assistant Agent to the Governor-General Luckimpore, to COLONEL FRANCIS JENKINS, Agent to the Governor-General North-East Frontier,—(No. ——, dated the 19th May 1860.)

SIR,—I HAVE the honor to forward the proceedings of a Committee of Planters and other grantees of land in this District, convened for the purpose of taking into consideration the suggestions of Government on the subject of Immigration.

2. The remarks in *Italics* have been made by two gentlemen who had not the opportunity of attending the Meeting, but to whom the papers were submitted.

3. With regard to the proceedings, I desire to state that whilst as a rule the Planters of Upper Assam would prefer Bengalee Coolies to those of Assam, I certainly think that Government, to secure their own interests, ought to place either a Head or House Tax on every Coolie of this Province employed on rent free land, who could not prove to the satisfaction of the Collector, either that he is independent, paid revenue to Government, or that the family of which he might be a member, paid a sufficiency of revenue to admit of his working as a Coolie.

4. It will be a long time before either *Native* capital or energy will secure labor from other parts of India. Accordingly in giving (and justly giving) natives the same privileges of holding rent free land, as are enjoyed by Europeans, the precautions referred to in paragraph III. will be especially required.

5. In giving full effect to the suggestion I have thrown out, it would undoubtedly be necessary, in a measure, to revise the present system of assessment. I am fully impressed with the belief that the ryots of Assam are not sufficiently taxed, and I believe, that every adult who could not prove that he either independently or as a member of a family, paid revenue on at least two Poorahs of land, ought to be assessed at a certain rate in the shape of Poll Tax.

Proceedings of a Meeting of Planters and other Grantees of Lands in the District of Luckimpore, Assam, on the 30th April 1860, convened for the purpose of taking into consideration certain propositions with regard to the importation of laborers into the Province of Assam, as contained in an Extract from a letter from the Officiating Secretary, Government of Bengal, to the Agent, Governor-General, North-East Frontier, No. 203, dated 20th January 1860.

LIEUTENANT B. W. D. MORTON Officiating Magistrate, Zillah Luckimpore, having been called to the chair, the following gentlemen are found to be present, viz. Colonel Hannay, Messrs. Barry, Wagentreeber, Campbell, Haly, Morgan and Jenkins.

The papers forwarded by the Agent, Governor-General, having been submitted to the Meeting, the following Resolutions are passed:—

1*st Resolution.*—This Meeting desires respectfully, but most firmly, to enter a protest against the erroneous impression conveyed in the following Extract from the 11th paragraph of the letter under consideration, and the proposal to drive established cultivators away from the cultivation of their land for grain and other ordinary food crops, by imposing on them an inordinate assessment for the purpose of forcing them to work as the laborers of Tea Planters, is one that cannot be entertained for a moment.

In the opinion of this Meeting, no course more detrimental to the true interests of those engaged in the cultivation of Tea could be pursued, than that driving the ryot from his field in the hope of making him take service in a Tea garden. What would thus be gained on the one hand by the addition of a few discontented laborers, would, on the other hand, be more than counterbalanced by the increased difficulty of procuring rice and other articles of food. In the opinion of this Meeting, the Land Tax through the Province is assuredly too light, and in gradually raising it to the higher rates which obtained in Bengal and elsewhere, this Meeting is impressed with the belief, the best interest of the ryot would be consulted. He would acquire habits of industry. Eventually a greater extent of land would be brought under cultivation, and Rice would not at all times be procurable at generally cheaper rates than now.

2nd Resolution.—With reference to the 12th paragraph of the letter under consideration, this Meeting considers itself called on to explain, that allowing for the large amount of capital expended, the length of time it is lying dead, and the trouble that is required to form and carry on a plantation, the cultivation of Tea does not yield more than a fair return. Further, that the wages of a Coolie at present are never less than Rupees 4-8 for a month of thirty days, and that if a laborer chooses to work by contract, and is withall an industrious man, he may earn his 8 Rupees per month with ease.

This Meeting finds it difficult to say exactly at what amount the rate of wages should be fixed. But taking into consideration the many advantages which the Emigrant will have, of not only settling hereafter in the Province, but of also holding from the Planters as much land for cultivation as they choose, rent free, during their time of service; and also considering the small amount of work at present constituting a *day's labor*, it does not consider that more than 5 Rupees per month could be offered.

3rd Resolution.—With reference to the proposal of Government, this Meeting desires to state that in its opinion any system of Emigration, to be successful, must be generally supported throughout the Province.

It further believes that the steady immigration of male laborers, accompanied by their wives and families, would be conducive to the first interest of the Government, as well as those of the Planters themselves. This Meeting representing, as it does, the Tea Planters of the District of Luckimpore, desires gratefully to acknowledge the readiness evinced by Government to meet the difficulty at present experienced in obtaining labor. It pledges itself to support any equitable scheme, to forward the supply of labor, which has for its basis the appointment of a Government Immigration Agent, and, in doing so, it would make the following suggestions:—

1*st.* That the laborer should be engaged for a term of at least five (5) years.

That the law with regard to breach of contract should be so amended, that any persons inducing such laborers, as are under agreement, to quit, on conviction before a Magistrate, should be liable to a fine not exceeding 200 Rupees.

2*nd.* That the law with regard to the breach of contract should be so amended, as to afford more efficient protection from breach of engagement on the part of the laborer.

3*rd.* That commodious Steamers should ply between Calcutta and Dibrooghur, at regular and fixed intervals, with a view to affording the Immigrants a speedy and safe voyage, and keeping up a steady supply of Rice and other articles of food, which, next to labor, is the great want of the Province.

4*th. Resolution.*—This Meeting takes the opportunity of bringing to the notice of Government, that exclusive of the laborers in the Assam Company's gardens, there are not more than 2,000 Coolies engaged in the cultivation of Tea in this District, of whom, at the outside, one-tenth only are natives of this District. Further, that the difficulty of procuring more hands, is the simple and only cause of the amount of land, already being brought under the cultivation of Tea, being so limited.

* *I think the proportion greater than this, one-fourth is near the mark.*

From RIVERS THOMSON Esq., Junior Secretary to the Government of Bengal, to the Agent to the Governor General, North-East Frontier.—(No. 1624, Fort William, the 30th June 1860.)

SIR,—I AM directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 79, dated the 31st ultimo, and with reference to the first Resolution passed at the Meeting of the Tea Planters and other Grantees, in the District of Luckimpore, in which the Committee emphatically deny that it is the wish of the Planters in Upper Assam to drive the ryots from the cultivation of their fields, in order to obtain their labor on the Tea plantations, I am desired to explain to you, and to beg you to be so good as to explain to the gentlemen concerned, that the Lieutenant-Governor's remarks, as conveyed to you in the 11th paragraph of the Officiating Secretary, Mr. Lushington's letter, No. 203, dated the 20th January, were not made with reference to any opinion supposed to be entertained by the Planters and grantees, but solely with reference to the opinions of certain Government Officers, conveyed in paragraphs 9 and 10 of

your letter No. 118, dated the 11th November last. A reference to that letter will show, that four public Officers, subordinate to you in the North-East Frontier Agency had, among other measures for the advancement of Tea cultivation in Assam, advocated the advisability of raising the land revenue, "as one means of throwing labor into the lands of the Planters, by compelling the ryots to seek for employment, in order to pay their revenue."

2. The objections you made to this proposition were fully concurred in by the Lieutenant-Governor, who is glad to find that the Luckimpore Planters and Grantees agree, in a certain measure, upon this point with you and him. I have to request that you will be good enough to explain this to the Luckimpore Committee.

3. With reference to the suggestion to raise the tax on cultivated land, with the view of giving the ryots habits of industry, and as a consequence of increasing the cultivation, I am desired to observe that in a Province, where there is so much good culturable waste land, and comparatively so little cultivated land, as in Assam, a light land tax is natural, in the same way that light rents would be natural, were the land farmed under private land owners. Under such circumstances, as the Lieutenant-Governor conceives, any artificial arrangement whereby the cultivation of land should be heavily taxed, could not fail to discourage cultivation. On this principle, reclaimed land for Tea cultivation is not taxed at all for a long term of years; and the same principle holds, as to reclaimed land for any other sort of cultivation. Where any quantity of waste land is available rent free for long terms, a heavy tax on old cultivated land seems impossible, as well as inexpedient.

4. Though, for these reasons, a very large increase of the land tax seems to the Lieutenant-Governor not to be possible, or desirable even if possible, it may nevertheless be true, as maintained by Lieutenant Morton, that the people of Assam are on the whole too lightly taxed, and that a moderate increase of taxation in that Province is expedient. The Lieutenant-Governor would wish you to turn your attention seriously to this subject. The object is to devise a tax that would not discourage the employment of labor and capital in any way, whether upon the cultivation of land, or for any other profitable purpose.

5. In regard to the second and following Resolutions, I am desired to state, that an arrangement has been made with the India General Steam Navigation Company, to run their Steamers on the Dacca and Assam line for the next six months, the Government withdrawing their Steamers form that line. The Company bind themselves to run a pair of boats once in six weeks, and they are to be allowed the use of the Government Pilots, and the coal laid down by the contractors for the Government vessels.

6. The rate of wages to Coolie Emigrants, will resolve itself with the practical question, of what may be found necessary to induce laborers to engage.

7. If the Planters generally agree to some system of importing laborers, the Lieutenant-Governor sees no difficulty likely to interfere with the practical working of such a system. The particular conditions suggested seem to him, as at present informed, unobjectionable: and if a periodical Steamer can be regularly filled, at remunerating rates, with laborers and Rice, or other freight, there is no doubt that the India General Steam Navigation Company, or other private parties will maintain one or more boats on the line.

8. The Lieutenant-Governor desires that you will give every assistance to the Planters of the several Districts, in coming to one understanding, universally, on the important practical question of the importation of labor.

From COLONEL F. JENKINS, Commissioner of Assam, to A. R. YOUNG, Esq., Secretary to the Government of Bengal,—(No. 426, dated the 24th July 1860.)

SIR,—IN further continuation of my letter No. 79, dated the 31st May last, transmitting the proceedings of a Committee of Tea Planters of the Luckimpore District, on the subject of importing labor into this Province, I have the honor to submit the annexed copy of the further proceedings of the Committee of the Tea Planters in the Sibsaugor District, forwarded with the enclosed copy of Captain Holroyd's letter No. 85, dated the 16th instant, for the consideration of the Hon'ble the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal on the observations and suggestions touching the questions at issue.

From CAPTAIN C. HOLROYD, Principal Assistant, Sibsaugor, to COLONEL F. JENKINS, Commissioner of Assam,—(No. 85, dated the 16th July 1860.)

SIR,—I HAVE the honor to forward the proceedings of a Meeting of Planters of the Sibsaugor District, held at Cinnamara Factory on the 16th ultimo, relative to the importation of labor into the Province of Assam; and solicit the favor of your submitting the same for the favorable consideration of His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal.

Proceedings of a Meeting of the Planters of the Sibsaugor District, held at Cinnamara Factory on the 16th June 1860, for the purpose of taking into consideration, certain observations and suggestions referring to the importation of labor into the Province of Assam, as contained in an Extract from a letter from the Officiating Secretary to the Government of Bengal, to the Governor-General's Agent, North-Eastern Frontier, No. 203 of the 20th January 1860.

CAPTAIN HOLROYD, Magistrate of Sibsaugor, having been called to the chair, the following gentlemen are found to be present, viz., Mr. Williamson, Junior, Messrs. Mackintosh, Gibson, Straford, Higginson, Herklats and Minto.

Before proceeding in the regular business of the Meeting, it is resolved to express the sense of gratitude entertained by the Members composing it, towards the Lieutenant-Governor, for the active interest he has evinced in the cultivation of Tea in Assam, for his just appreciation of the difficulties of our position, and for the promise of the legitimate assistance of Government in the establishment and working of a well devised scheme of Coolie Emigration.

His Honor having invited those interested in the cultivation of Tea in the Province, to state their views upon this important proposition, and to indicate in what way the Government could best assist in carrying it into practical effect, we beg to submit the following, as being in our opinion the most important points, for consideration.

1*st*. A regular monthly Steam communication with the Province, capable of transporting 500 Emigrants at each trip.

2*nd*. The establishment of an Emigration Agency in Calcutta, subject to the control of the Planters, and under the recognition and encouragement of Government, having a certain recognized form of agreement or contract between the Planters and Coolies as legal, and binding in all Indian Courts of Law, and the signature of the Agent, for the time being affixed to the document, held to be sufficient proof of its validity.

3*rd*. That the law relating to breach of contract be rendered more effective.

4*th*. That whilst we note with much satisfaction the improvement lately effected on the roads of this District, we would still urge upon the consideration of Government, the expediency of the leading thoroughfares being made passable for wheeled conveyances; and that the Grand Trunk Road between Upper Assam and Rungpore, Bengal, be opened out, and kept in a state of repair, so as to promote general intercourse and trade, and facilitate the transmission of Emigrants and cattle by land during the dry season of the year,—a very important matter considering the inadequacy of even a monthly Steam communication to meet our present requirements in labor.

5*th*. That should special legislation be necessary to give effect to any of the measures proposed, His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor be solicited to move the Legislature to pass the required Act.

With reference to the first point, regular Steam communication, we would beg to submit that, to cultivate in an efficient manner the land already cleared in this District, 8 or 10,000 additional hands would be required, and that the immediate requirements of the entire Province may be estimated at double that number. This does not provide for future extension, which is now purely a question of labor; and in suggesting that the carrying accommodation should be equal to about 500 souls, we have been guided less by a consideration of the actual necessities of our position, than by what we think could be conceded by Government.

In order that the Emigrants be landed in as healthy a condition as possible, it appears to us desirable that Steamers of greater power be provided, so as to perform the trip in a much shorter space of time; and that as far as practicable, arrangements be made to ensure them a certain degree of comfort, convenience, and protection from the weather during the voyage. This is more particularly required where the Emigration consists of entire families.

We are further of opinion that the general trade of the Province is not yet sufficiently developed, to induce a trading Company to place an efficient fleet of Steamers on the Line; and that, in the first instance, we must look to the Government for the effective performance of this service. It is not improbable that, if the Government offered a guarantee of 5 per cent on the capital a public Company could be speedily organized; and it appears to us to merit the consideration of His Honor, whether it would not be true economy to do so, in anticipation of the great impulse it would certainly impart to the general prosperity of the Province.

Adverting to the second point, the establishment of an Emigration Agency—the details of this measure would be matter for arrangement in concert with the Government.

As regards the wages to be offered, we may state that Coolies are now imported into this District at four Rupees per month for men, and corresponding rates for women and children; but that if these wages should prove insufficient to induce Emigration on a scale commensurate to the present wants of the Province, we would be prepared to make such an advance, on existing rates, as might be found necessary to render the scheme practically effective. It ought also to be observed that the nominal rates of wages very imperfectly represent the advantages of the service; the light nature of the work being peculiarly favorable for the employment of women and children, and the tasks so adjusted, that an industrious Coolie can always earn far beyond his or her nominal wages. Instances are not infrequent of men earning from 6 to 10 Rupees per month, and families of four individuals, over 20 Rupees.

We would deprecate the construction put upon a recommendation recently made by several of the Collectors and Planters of the Province, to the effect that it would be conducive to the best interests of the country to put a moderate increase on the land tax. This recommendation appears to have conveyed the impression, that the sole object of the parties making it, was to drive the people away from the cultivation of Rice and other products, and compel them to work as Coolies in Tea plantations. Such was certainly not the object, nor are we prepared to admit that the effect predicted is a logical deduction from the proposition—we do not advocate this measure with the view of obtaining an important accession to our supply of labor, which we do not by any means anticipate; and shall be quite contented if the Assamese can be sufficiently roused from their lethargic habits, to supply the greatly increased demand for the primary articles of food, which is certain to follow emigration on a large scale.

In conclusion, we would beg to observe that we read with regret a Notification in the *Government Gazette* of the —— to the effect, that grantees of waste land were permitted to commute the annual payment of revenue, by payment down of a certain fixed sum, and from which we infer, that the proposal lately made to purchase the land in fee simple, has not met with the favorable consideration of Government.

We believe it is apprehended that the passing of this measure would lead to undue speculation in land, and afford too much scope of jobbing and monopolizing tendencies, although in our opinion, this would be less liable to be the case than under the existing rules.

The payment down of a considerable sum of money, and the sinking of unproductive capital would, perhaps, in ordinary cases, operate as a sufficient check against abuses of the nature apprehended. But if this should not be deemed sufficient, a few simple conditions might be attached, which would have the desired effect, without in any way crippling legitimate enterprize. For instance, in Canada a tax is imposed, after a certain period, on the uncultivated portion of the lands sold, and perhaps the same principle could be made applicable to Assam.

Proposed and carried (*nem. con.*) that Mr. Gibson be nominated corresponding Member of this Committee, to carry out in conjunction with the Committees formed in other parts of the Province, the contemplated measures for the establishment of an Agency, and the periodical transmission of Emigrants to Assam.

From RIVERS THOMPSON, Esq., Junior Secretary to the Government of Bengal, to the Commissioner of Assam,—(No. 2123, Fort William, the 17th August 1860.)

SIR,—I AM directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 426, dated the 24th ultimo, submitting a copy of the proceedings of a Committee of Tea Planters of the Sibsaugor District on the subject of importing labor into the Province of Assam.

2. In reply, I am desired to refer you to my letter No. 1624, dated the 30th June last, and to explain that the question of the purchase of land in the Province, in fee simple, is by no means determined in the negative, but is now before the Government of India with the Lieutenant Governor's recommendation in its favor. Nothing can be done by Government till the scheme for immigration of *all* the Planters is stated. You are requested to give them every assistance to enable them to form some generally approved plan of operations.

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